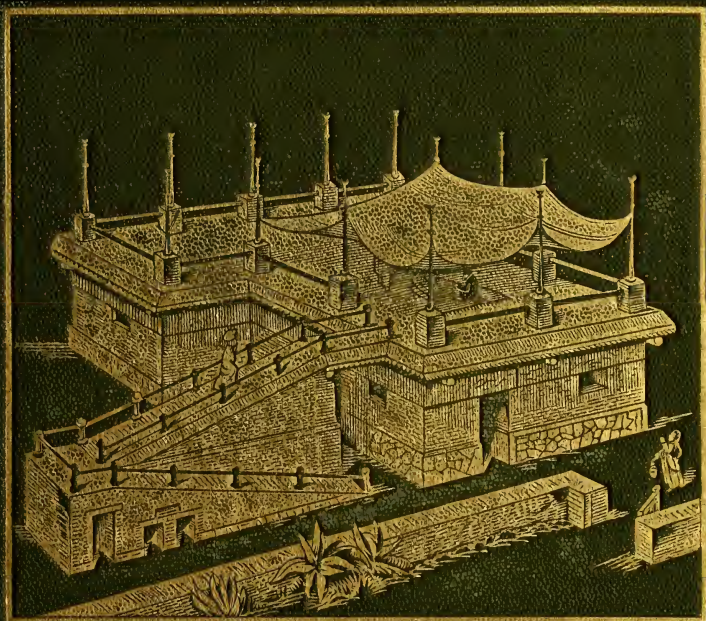


THE HABITATIONS OF MAN IN ALL AGES



· VIOLLET-LE-DUC ·





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IN ALL AGES.

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HABITATIONS OF MAN IN ALL AGES



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Aug. 1878

THE
HABITATIONS OF MAN
IN ALL AGES

BY
EUGENE VIOLLET-LE-DUC

TRANSLATED BY BENJAMIN BUCKNALL
ARCHITECT



With Numerous Illustrations

LONDON
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON
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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

THE instructive and interesting book, a translation of which I now present to the English reader, describes the origin and development of Domestic Architecture among the several races of mankind, the modes in which human dwellings have been constructed, and the appearance and manners of their inhabitants from pre-historic down to modern times. The pencil of the artist has aided our imagination vividly to realise all the chief features in this progress ; the rude shelter of primitive man, the shifting habitations of nomadic hordes, the massive grandeur of Egyptian and Assyrian dwellings, the quaint peculiarities of those of China, the elegant abodes of the cultivated Greek and wealthy Roman, the lordly castle of feudal times, and the sumptuous mansions of the Renaissance.

The interest of the subject is further enhanced by the doings and discussions of two imaginary witnesses of this development,—“Epergos” and “Doxius”—personifying respectively the spirit of Progress and that of obstinate adherence to traditional forms and habits.

This latest work of M. Viollet-le-Duc contains the results of his studies in wide and varied fields ; and among

the principles which his extensive and masterly survey brings into prominence, none, perhaps, is more striking than the fact that it is impossible for man to forget his past ; and that just as the incidents of childhood make the most lasting impression upon the memory of the individual, and early habits affect his whole career, so does tradition—which is the memory of a people—perpetuate those habits and methods which necessity or predisposition induced in its infancy. Methods of construction adopted in times of primitive simplicity leave traces in the architecture of later periods, when that simplicity has been exchanged for luxury and refinement. On the other hand, we observe how, in the domestic architecture of the past, the main features of construction are determined by a consideration of habits, exigencies of climate and situation, the nature of the materials and the means of execution at the command of the builders ; while we find them succeeding in giving even to the most primitive conceptions and modest structures that charm which arises from the free expression of a rational application of means to an end, and which, in human works, constitutes Art.

This interesting review naturally suggests an important practical question. How is it, that with all our accumulated science, wealth of means, and facilities for studying the artistic works of past ages, few of our buildings possess the charm of Art, while in so many it is conspicuously absent ? May we not reply that the cause of our failure is the absence of rational method in design and execution ; and that if we brought to bear upon our architectural works the same amount of knowledge, reflection,

and common sense which is manifested in our purely engineering and naval constructions, we should possess an architecture of our own, worthy of our advanced civilisation and in harmony with our national genius?

I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my deep obligation to Mr John Sibree, M.A. Univ. Lond., the accomplished translator of Hegel's "Philosophy of History," for the assistance rendered me here, as well as in my translations of other works of Viollet-le-Duc, by his able and scholarly revision of my manuscript for the press.

BENJ. BUCKNALL,
Archit.

COALEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Nov. 1875.



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THE HABITATIONS OF MAN IN ALL AGES.



PROLOGUE.

IN an age very remote from the present, seated upon a mountain brow, two beings are pensively contemplating the vast landscape which stretches before them.

Lakes of irregular shape, connected by stagnant shallows, enclose level expanses covered with scrubby vegetation, varied here and there by low rocks which show like long upright *faults*. The horizon is broken by a mountain chain of fantastic outline.

The sun's disc, broad, lurid, and rayless, sheds a faint glow on the innumerable liquid streaks through the vapours suspended above them. Beneath this veiled light, the tracts of dry land stand out dark and definite against the haze.

Confused sounds penetrate the warm moist air. They are the croakings of batrachians, the hissings of reptiles, the lowings and bleatings of ruminants, the hoarse roar of mammoths, and the cries of large birds.

"All is as it should be," says one of the beings.

"Nothing is complete," returns the other; "look at those creatures below this mountain, which we see assembling, then dispersing, looking about, and betaking themselves to shelter."

“Well?”

“They are not animals like the others. . . . They are excited—restless—gaze in every direction, and move erect on their feet.”

“They live, eat, and reproduce their kind . . . they exemplify the universal law.”

“No, look! they are fighting among themselves, they hurl stones at one another; they move in bodies, armed with branches of trees.”

“All animals fight among themselves.”

“Look again! there is an enormous bear coming out of the thicket; these creatures cease fighting; they gather together; they form a circle round the terrible animal, and overwhelm it with stones. The beast does not know where to make its attack; it growls, and with bristling hair turns about. Look! the circle narrows: several of the creatures carry long sticks armed at their extremity with sharp stones. They strike at the furious bear in concert. . . . It turns upon them. . . . Two of the assailants have fallen, torn by the bear’s claws. Nevertheless the animal is overpowered,—behold it stretched on the ground, covered with ropes made of rushes.”

“All animals engage in attack and defence.”

“Look again! they crowd round the two wounded ones; they carry them to the shore of the lake, lay them down on leaves and wash their wounds. See how they bend over them; hear those cries.”

“What of that! Every created being has its aptitudes, its instincts: some make themselves nests: others burrow in the ground or build dwellings. Some flock together; some live apart, distrustful of their kind: all have their prey, and seek to provide against the attacks of their enemies. Thus should it be.”

“Let us go down amongst these creatures. Come!”

“For what purpose?”

“Perhaps we shall find?”

“What?”

“That which we have to seek.”

“Vain and restless spirit!”

“Be that as it may. Come!”



CHAPTER I.

ARE THEY MEN?

A DOZEN creatures, heavy of limb, with skin of a livid yellow,—the crown of their heads covered with scanty black hair falling over their eyes, and with hooked nails,—are grouped together beneath a bushy tree whose lower branches have been pulled downwards and secured to the ground by clods of earth. The wind is blowing violently and driving the rain right through this shelter. Rush mats and skins of beasts afford a scanty protection to the limbs of these creatures, who with their nails tear portions of animals and quickly devour them (fig. 1).

Night comes on and the rain increases. The strongest collect dead branches and long grasses, and pluck ferns and reeds, and heap them up against the wind ; then, with sticks and with their hands, they try to make the water that invades their retreat run off by throwing soil on the piled-up branches.

Despite the violence of the storm, locked together like a nest of snakes, they all sleep except one, who keeps watch, uttering prolonged and plaintive cries through the night to keep away noxious animals. When he gets sleepy, he awakens one of his companions, who takes his place.

In the morning the wind has abated, but the rain continues to fall in a close drizzle. The foot of the tree is under water. Then each one sets about looking for branches, reeds, and mud to raise the ground. Some reptiles, driven from their retreats, take refuge on the

clods around the shelter, and are killed with sticks to serve as food for the family.

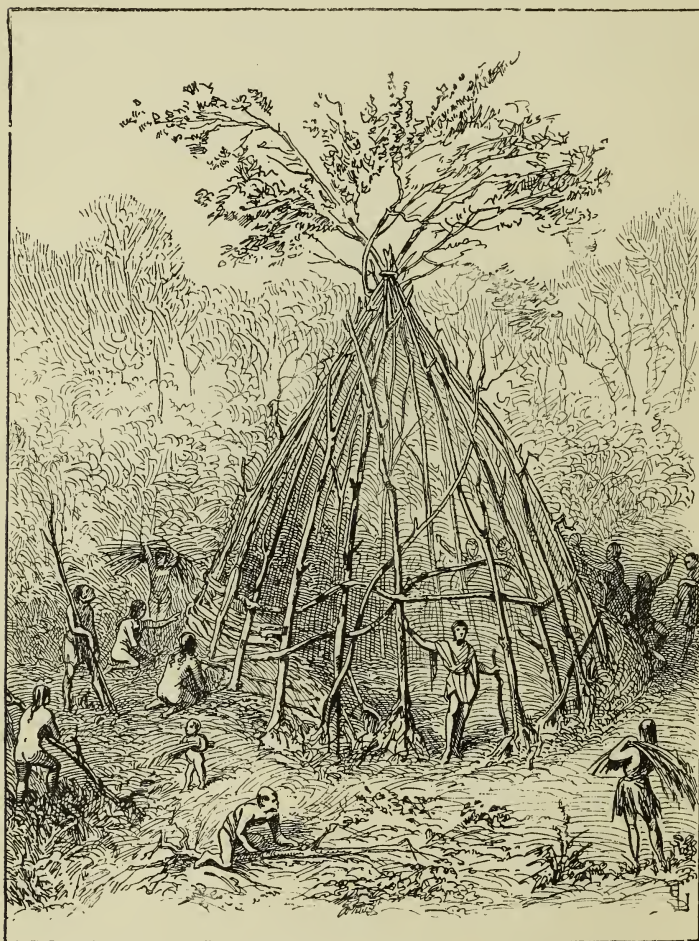
Not far off, Epergos, seized with compassion at sight of this misery, selects two young trees a few paces apart. Climbing one of these, he bends it down by the weight of his body, pulls towards him the top of the other with the help of a hooked stick, and thus joining the branches of



The First Shelter.—FIG. 1.

the two trees, ties them together with rushes. The creatures that have gathered round him look on wondering. But Epergos does not mean them to remain idle, and makes them understand that they must go and find other young trees in the neighbourhood. With their hands and with the help of sticks they uproot and drag them to

Epergos; who then shows them how they should be inclined in a circle by resting their tops against the first two trees that had been fastened together. Then he shows



The First Hut.—FIG. 2.

them how to fill in the spaces with rushes, branches, and long grass interlaced; then how their roots should be

covered with clay, and the whole structure successively (fig. 2); leaving an opening on the side opposite to the wind that brings the rain. On the floor he has dead branches and reeds spread, and mud trodden down with the feet.

By the end of the day the hut is finished, and each family among the Naïrriti wishes to have one like it.

Epergos, covered with sweat and dirt, then rests by his companion Doxius. "Why," says the latter, "thus run counter to things as they are? Wouldst thou be for teaching the birds how to make their nests, the beavers to build themselves huts different from those they are accustomed to make? Why thus alter the Creator's work?"

"Who knows!" answers Epergos: "let us return here in a hundred thousand days, and we shall see whether these creatures have forgotten my instructions and live as they were living yesterday. If so, then I am wrong in meddling with their affairs, and I have not found what I have been seeking; but if they have profited by my suggestions,—if the huts we see then are better made than these, I have been successful, for in that case these creatures are not mere animals."

"Folly!" returns Doxius; "what then can they be?"

"How can I tell?"



CHAPTER II.

THE ARYAS.

DOXIUS and his companion have halted in the midst of an elevated country. It is a vast plateau, commanded on the north by a chain of mountains whose summits, lost in the mists, are seldom visible.

Wide and deep valleys furrow the plateau, and torrents rush down the slopes and along their beds, which are covered with rocky fragments and forests.

Eternal snows clothe the heights. Accumulating, they spread out in long glaciers as far as the bottom of the valleys, hollowing out gleaming furrows, and pushing before them rocks and sand. If at times the rays of the sun warm the atmosphere, the vapours soon rise from every quarter, along the slopes, enveloping the mountain-tops, and gather in dense clouds; the air darkens, and terrible storms last for several days.

Overtaken by one of these storms, Epergos and Doxius have sought shelter under a rock. The close rain prevents them from distinguishing objects a few paces off, and the echoes return the claps of thunder which seem to burst from all points of the horizon; when a voice clear and ringing strikes the ear of the two companions; they have never heard anything on earth of which its intonations remind them. The voice comes nearer,—they can distinguish the words:

“The milk of the cloud has swollen our waters, and we

are ever moving onward to the reservoir which God has prepared for us. We cannot stay our course. . . . What does the sage desire who interrogates the rivers?"

"What is that?" says Epergos.

"It is the noise of the wind," answers Doxius.

"No; it is a spirit. He is close to the rock." . . .

In reality, a being like the two companions comes under the rock. . . .

"Who art thou?" asks Epergos.

"Arya," replies the stranger.

"Thou art alone?"

"No: I am the father of a numerous family. I have a wife, children, and nephews, not far off, in my dwelling. Come with me; you will rest better than under this rock; but let us wait a little till the clouds pass away."

"And how are you occupied in this dwelling?"

"The mother brings up our children. I have flocks and herds which I tend, and with the milk I feed the family. With my weapons I defend them against wild beasts and enemies. In the morning, before the rising of the sun, and in the evening, after its setting, we sacrifice. The young men help me out of doors,—the maidens weave garments, gather in the *sôma*, milk the cows, and keep the dwelling clean."

"Are there other families besides thine?"

"Many."

"What dost thou say to this, Doxius?"

"I say that the Creator has created, and all is good."

"We shall see," says Epergos to himself.

The rain abates, and masses of whitish vapour, drifted by the wind, are spread in flakes through the forests. Sometimes dark spots are visible between them—the bottom of the valley or some point of rock; at other times they present only a grey mass shutting out every object from view.

"Let us go!" says the *Hom*, and the companions follow their guide.

Shortly after, two boys are seen coming through the mist. "Father!" they say, "the storm is terrible up yonder. We were in search of thee, and are glad to meet thee."

"Here are guests," the father answers. "Hasten to tell your mother to make ready what is needful."

Doxius, Epergos, and the father reach the dwelling. It is placed against high rocks which shelter it from the wind. The roof, very projecting, is supported by forked trunks of trees. The walls are formed of other trunks laid horizontally one upon the other, and framed together at the corners.

On either side of the dwelling, a little in advance, are two sheds: one is intended for the cattle during the winter, and the other contains forage (fig. 3). The walls of these sheds are made of coarse wicker mats.

These three structures surround a kind of area, in the middle of which is a large stone, smooth and clean.

Surrounded by her children, the mother receives the guests beneath the overhanging roof, and takes them into the hut, at the farther end of which, against the rock which serves to support the building, a bright fire is burning, whose smoke finds vent through an opening contrived in the roof, and a long wooden flue.

Rush mats cover the beaten floor; other mats are hung along the walls and across the hut, dividing it into three nearly equal parts. Lamb-skins laid upon heaps of dried herbs form seats round the hearth, in front of which a large black earthen pot is giving out steam of an agreeable odour.

Epergos observes all these things not without surprise. As for Doxius, he seats himself near the hearth, and looks at the flame.

"Mother," says the *Hom*, "get ready the meal; these

strangers must be hungry." Then turning towards his



The Primitive House of the Arya.—FIG. 3.

guests: "Perhaps you are tired ; rest awhile before you eat. Here are lamb-skins provided for you."

"No," says Epergos, "we are in no want of rest.—May I ask if it is long since your family settled here?"

"Stranger, why this question? Have I asked thee whence thou comest, or where thou wast going? The Aryas have always inhabited this mountain. My father, and my father's father, lived in this house, which is ours as well as the pasturage round about. . . . But of what interest is that to thee?"

"Pardon me; but my companion and I know nothing of these things. We knew not that these elevated plateaus were inhabited by Aryas. Hitherto we had only seen on the earth beings inferior to thee, living like the brutes on raw flesh and wild herbs,—not knowing how to build places of shelter,—naked and filthy."

"Yes, the Dasyus," replied the master, "an accursed race. Indra will drive them from the earth, which they defile by their presence, and which belongs to the Aryas!"

At these words a faint smile escaped from Doxius. The fury of the storm was increasing. Black clouds were gathering on the neighbouring peaks, and the reflection of a dull grey light gave place to the bright flame of the fire. The wind was lifting the mat hanging in front of the triangular doorway, and was driving the hailstones into the very middle of the hut. The younger children, holding their mother's long tunic, had become silent, whilst the father and his eldest son were securing the mats which closed the openings with rush cords.

The thunder did not cease rolling, but with a muffled sound.

At times there came a lull; then a kind of distant wail was heard, but which came ever nearer, and seemed to issue from every point at the same time; then the cracking of trees close by, and the cabin shook, and the rain beat violently on the pine bark which covered the roof.

Soon the water, driven against the rock that supported the house, found its way in through several openings, and ran over the floor; a cracking noise was heard; it was the top of the large smoke-shaft, which was giving way, borne down by the water. A torrent of mud then fell upon the fire. The hut was no longer tenable; smoke, hail, and blackened water were pouring into it on every side. All had to take shelter in the cattle-shed, then empty, the animals being out at pasture.

The *Hom* and his companion first bethought them of their guests. They housed themselves as well as they could in the shed, and for supper had to be content with milk, cheese, and pine seeds. Towards break of day the storm ceased, and the stars shone out in the sky.

Just as they were beginning to pale, the father and his family went out of the shed and advanced towards the stone placed in the centre of the area. The mother was holding two earthen vessels: one containing a liquid extracted from the *sôma*, the other some butter.

The father, having taken from beneath his garment a bundle of dry grass and sticks, laid it on the stone; and rapidly turning a stick in a piece of bark, the latter soon blackened and took fire. The dry grass being lighted, the mother poured over it a small quantity of the liquor of the *sôma*; immediately the flame burned with a bright light, and the father pronounced with a sonorous voice these words:

“I invoke for you the bright Agni, host of the people, . . . that he may pour down floods of light, and from his central fire load his servant with good gifts.

“We love to honour this God, the source of all your prosperity; we love to see him increase and send forth his beams. His flames undulate on the branches.”

Then the mother having thrown butter on the altar, the fire blazed with fresh brilliance.

"Seizing on the wood which he consumes, he shines in splendour; he rushes along like a torrent, resounding in his course like a chariot; a trail of blackness marks his path. He charms like the sun smiling between the clouds. Give us, O Agni, brave comrades, happy abundance, noble offspring, and great wealth!"

The sun was then beginning to light up with touches of gold the snowy peaks defined against the deep blue of the sky. The air was keen and piercing. The family were standing in silence before the fire, gazing intently eastwards. Nothing broke the stillness save the noise of the neighbouring torrent.

The two companions stood a little way off. Then said Epergos aside to Doxius, "What thinkest thou of all this?"

"I think that these Aryas, as they call themselves, will destroy the Creator's work. They were not wanted on the earth."

Epergos made no answer.



CHAPTER III.

THE NEW DWELLING OF THE "HOM."

"TAKE care of our guests," said the father to his companion. "I am going to seek my brothers to help us to rebuild our dwelling;" and taking his eldest son with him, he plunged into the neighbouring forest.

Assisted by her second son, the wife, after having served her guests with milk, began to look among the ruins of the fallen house for things which might still be used.

Epergos, raising the fallen timbers, was helping her, while Doxius seemed lost in meditation.

"Doxius!" cried Epergos; "come thou, too, and help us!"

"Why," answered Doxius, "since this hut has fallen, seek to rebuild it?"

"Why!" warmly replied his companion. "When the storm has destroyed its nest, does not the bird form it anew? If a stone falls into an ant's nest, do not the ants make another by the side of it?"

"True," answered Doxius; and he went to aid in the clearing.

Towards the middle of the day, the father returned with his two brothers, and by sunset the site of the hut was cleared. The brothers had brought some provisions. The weather was fine, and a large fire having been lighted in the court, the inhabitants and the two companions seated

themselves around it on clods of turf, and having eaten their meal, thus conversed :

"Host," said Epergos, "if you build your dwelling against this rock, are you not afraid that the first storm will overthrow it again?"

"Yes," replied the Arya; "but my father lived there, and I wish to live there."

"Be it so; but then should you not turn aside the rain-water which collects up there and pours down upon the roof?"

"Blasphemer!" muttered Doxius to himself, "who gave thee the right to turn aside the waters of the sky?"

Epergos merely smiled, and continued :

"In the morning we will ascend the rock, and see if we can lead the rain-water to the right or left of your dwelling."

"That might perhaps be done," returned the father; "I had already thought of that."

"And then," continued Epergos, "why not build the walls of your dwelling with fragments of stone and earth? It would thus be more substantial, and protect you better from cold and heat."

"We will try," replied the Arya.

"*Hom!*" then said Doxius, "just now you spoke wisely; you said that you wished to have your father's house restored; rebuild it then just as it was—just as your father left it you."

"But," returned Epergos, "who has told thee that the house destroyed yesterday was in every respect like that which was probably erected in the same place before it?"

"It was not like it," said the Arya; "for my father told me that his father's dwelling was smaller, and was covered with dry grass."

"Then," said Epergos, "we can make the new one more spacious and strong than the last was."

"Where wilt thou limit thy desires?" murmured Doxius.

"Why should I limit them? Let us set to work, that will be better than talking." . . .

"Woman," continued Epergos, addressing his hostess, "tell us, you who have always lived in the house, and have taken care of the things it contained, whether the ruined dwelling suited you in all respects; whether you found it wide enough, high enough, and sufficiently weather-proof?"

"It is true," answered the woman, "the children were cramped for space; in high winds the smoke often annoyed us, and we were scarcely sheltered from the north wind or the heat. Still, such as it was, we lived happily and peacefully in it." And she began to weep.

"No useless tears!" said the Arya. "Let us set to work before the sun disappears behind the mountain. Come with us, mother, and tell this stranger what thou wantest in addition to that which we had before, since he shows a desire to help us."

The wife then pointed out, on the site of the cleared ruins, the space she proposed to allot to the children, the common apartment, and the room intended for herself and her husband. And it was not without shedding fresh tears that she thus designated each part of the house.

"Thou seest," said Doxius, "this woman thinks only of her ruined dwelling; and all that thy knowledge enables thee to build will never make her forget that old habitation where she brought up her family. Be satisfied, therefore, with the building such as it was; our hosts will be happy and will bless thee."

"Leave me to act," replied Epergos. "Present good makes us forget that which is past: the fruit makes us forget the flower."

"And winter blights both," muttered Doxius between his teeth.

In the way of tools the Arya had only hatchets of flint provided with handles, and a kind of saw of the same material.

While the host, his brothers, Epergos, and the eldest of the children, went into the neighbouring forest to cut the timber required, Doxius remained with the mother. He led her thoughts back to the ruined dwelling, and took pleasure in getting her to describe minutely the various parts of the hut, the primitive furniture it contained, and the family events it had witnessed. Doxius seemed moved by each touching souvenir communicated by his hostess, and constantly repeated: "Have this dwelling therefore rebuilt in such a way that you may find everything in the place it formerly occupied, and may not have occasion to regret anything of the past."

When in the evening the *homs* returned, covered with sweat, and dragging after them the timber collected in the forest, they observed the woman silent and sad.

The meal was not prepared, and they were exceedingly hungry. "Mother!" said the Arya, "what is the matter, and why this sad countenance? What has happened to hinder thee from preparing our food?"

The woman, her eyes red with weeping, made no reply, but hastened to make up for the time lost.

"The mother," said Epergos, "regrets her ruined habitation; her melancholy has caused her to forget our wants and her own. It is only natural. When she finds herself mistress of a larger and more comfortable dwelling her sadness will vanish. Let her indulge her regrets, and to-morrow we will set to work."

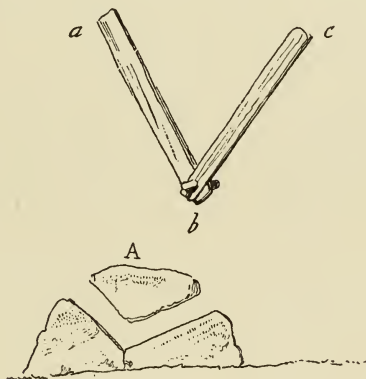
At daybreak, in fact, they began to mark out the new house, and to get everything in readiness to erect it

speedily. By the advice of Epergos they determined to build the house upon a platform formed with an edging of large stones, so as to preserve the floor inside from the damp kept up by the rain around the old dwelling. Next the perimeter of the house was commenced with stones fitted carefully together. A first course was placed on the



Building with Rough Stones.—FIG. 4.

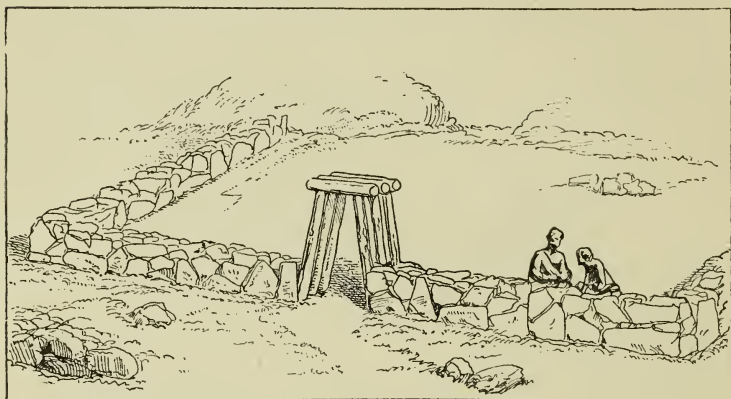
ground (fig. 4), the broadest face downwards; then by means of two pieces of wood joined with a peg (fig. 5),



The Bevil.—FIG. 5.

they took the angle $a b c$ made by the two stones already in place, and looked for a stone which should present nearly that angle; having found one, they put this stone A in that angle, and similarly for all the first course; so that by the end of the day the basement of the future

dwelling was formed, an open space being left for the door (fig. 6).



Basement formed with Rough Stones.—FIG. 6.

With smaller fragments the basement was made even. The walls were terminated by the rock.

“If instead of these piled-up trunks of trees, which formed the walls of your dwelling,” said Epergos, next morning when they had resumed the work, “we were to raise the walls with stone up to the height of the roof, should we not thus have a more substantial and durable shelter?”

“Certainly,” replied the father; “but how could we lift these stones? we have already had great difficulty in laying the last.”

“Observe,” returned Epergos, “what we can do: we will not lift stones from below, but go and find some up there, on the rock, and let them down on trunks of trees inclined so as to form a road. In proportion as the wall rises we will give less slope to the trunks, by resting them on the wall.”

“Let us try,” said the Arya. Accordingly, with the

help of bonds made of supple branches, the stones were let down from the rock on trees laid side by side slantwise, their lower ends resting on the side walls, already showing above the ground. Thus the walls were raised without very great difficulty, openings being left for the door and windows. This work, however, necessarily took up a great deal of time, for the workmen were not very skilful; the rain, too, came on again, and continued falling for four and twenty hours. One evening, while the family and their guests were taking their meal, crouching round a fire sheltered by a few mats, discouragement was marked on their faces; the children clustering round their mother were shivering, and but few words were exchanged; Epergos alone preserved his usual cheerfulness. "I see," said he at last, "that the task we have undertaken appears to you heavy and very tedious. We should have finished sooner if we had made walls of trunks of trees piled one upon the other as in the house that has fallen."

"That," said Doxius immediately, "is what wisdom enjoined; and this woman and her children would now have been under shelter in their dwelling if thy imprudence had not induced thee to undertake a labour beyond thy strength."

"Alas," sighed the mother.

"Reflect, however," returned Epergos, "that durability is secured only by that which requires time for its growth, and labour in its production. The oak grows more slowly than the fern; but the latter dries up in the winter, while the oak endures, and ultimately covers a wide space with its branches. The insect makes itself a dwelling for its life, which ends with the summer, and has not to trouble itself about succeeding generations. But you, Arya, ought to build yourself an abode that shall last your life, and if possible, that of your children; for they will bear you in

remembrance if they preserve the roof you have made for them, and will realise your presence as still with them. The sight of the places you have inhabited will remind them of your courage, and your care for their happiness. My companion Doxius asserts that nothing can be altered for the better, and that all should be in the future as it is in the present. He insists on preserving the good and the bad indifferently—that which is imperfect along with that which is completed. Do not be swayed by his counsels, if you would preserve a distinction between yourself and the brutes.”

“The Creator of all things,” replied Doxius with some asperity, “has apportioned to each creature the quantum of intelligence which enables it to obtain what it requires; to exceed this measure is to overstep the limit which He has marked out. These Aryas have instruments with which they cut wood and break stone—that is already more than they ought to have; the bird needs no tools to build its nest, and so lives within the limit assigned to it, without desiring more or better. Thou hast found this family settled in a habitation which seemed to them a good one, and where they lived in peace; an accident has destroyed this dwelling, and immediately thy restless disposition suggests to our host the idea of erecting a new one by methods which exceed his powers and require long days of toilsome labour, whereas he might return to the shelter of his roof restored to its former condition in a few hours. Is this wise?”

“We should have finished sooner if thou hadst lent us thine aid,” interrupted Epergos. “Since the *Hom* has a conception of the best, he ought to follow the tendency which leads him towards that best; and it is to contravene the intentions of the Creator to say to him: ‘Thou shalt stop here.’”

The Arya had listened attentively to this discussion; putting his hand on Epergos' shoulder, he said to him: "Guest, it shall be done as thou hast said."

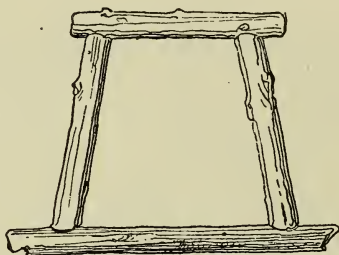
Next day the family set to work with fresh ardour, and in a few days the house was finished (fig. 7).



Rebuilt House of the Arya.—FIG. 7.

By the advice of Epergos the openings had been formed by means of leaning wooden jambs with cross-pieces above (fig. 8). The stones rested against the jambs and upon the lintels, so that they were kept securely in place. The joints, more or less open between the stones, had been filled with moss mixed with clay. The openings were

covered with mats. In front of the habitation, upon the plateau which raised the structure above the natural soil, was a portico formed with forked trunks of trees set upright, which received a cross-piece on which rested the timbers supporting the roofing of pine-bark. This time



Construction of a Window-Opening.—FIG. 8.

the fireplace was made with large flat stones fixed upright. On these stood the framing to which were fastened the pieces of bark forming the smoke flue. The pieces of bark were kept in place by osier bands, and the whole was plastered with clay which they found in the neighbourhood.

On the top of the rock the workmen had made a dyke by means of trunks of trees laid down, intermingled with pebbles made firm with earth. Thus the rain-water flowed off right and left, and could no longer penetrate the roof. They settled in this new dwelling, more roomy, strong, and weather-proof than its predecessor. They were working at the mats which were to form the partitions. The father was engaged in making the earthen vessels which were to replace those broken. For this he used clay procured in the neighbourhood, and which he fashioned with his hands on a thin slab resting on a stone pivot. He made this plate revolve so as to give the vessels a circular form. Epergos was watching him at work, and attentively con-

sidering some fragments of pottery broken by the fall of the house.

"How do you give these vessels the hardness necessary to enable them to hold water?"

"By drying them in the sun and surrounding them with fire when they are quite dry."

"If so," returned Epergos, "you might make walls with this earth, and make them very hard by surrounding them with a hot fire."

"Those masses of earth could not be sufficiently dried; being thick they would retain some moisture and would burst with the heat; for if our vessels are too thick, and not thoroughly dried before they are baked, they burst."

"Oh, then you might bake pieces of earth small enough to dry well, and by their union form walls easier to build than ours were, made of large and heavy stones."

The Arya, listening to his guest, had suspended his work; he reflected a few moments, then taking some soft earth he beat it on a stone to make it thinner, cut it square with a piece of sharp wood, and said:

"Thine is a good suggestion, Epergos; we will try to bake this with the vessels."

Shortly afterwards, aided by the sun's heat, the pottery was well dried; the Arya built around a circular wall of pebbles, then he filled up the whole space with small wood which he lighted, taking care to keep up the fire. In half a day the vessels appeared to be sufficiently baked; they were allowed to cool slowly until the next morning. Some of them were broken or mis-shapen; but the earthen slab was hard, sonorous, and of a beautiful brown colour.

"Well," said Epergos to his host, "thou hast no need of any other material to make the walls thou desirest to build. Thy children can shape pieces of earth, and when

thou hast a certain quantity thou wilt have them baked together, and thus form a floor in thy house quite dry and clean; and if some of the slabs are large and thin enough thou canst lay them on the timbers which form the roof, and shelter thy family from the rain."

CHAPTER IV.

THE YELLOW RACE.

A PLAIN covered with luxuriant vegetation stretches as far as the eye can reach; it is traversed by a wide river with a slow and muddy current, which separates into a number of branches, leaving between them long low islands. On the horizon there rises an immense cone crowned with snow, from the summit of which escapes a cloud of white vapours. On the banks of the river may be seen scattered habitations, which are built partly in the water, partly on *terra firma*. The men who live in these dwellings have not the lofty stature, the long fair hair, the white skin, and blue eyes of the Aryas, but are of medium height; their skin is yellow and shining; their eyes, black and small, are contracted and turned up at their outer extremities; their hair is of the colour of the raven's wing, and beneath their short nose opens a wide mouth which exhibits short sharp teeth.

Epergos and Doxius would scarcely have felt disposed to make a long sojourn among this people, had not the aspect of their habitations strongly excited their curiosity. All these houses present a gay appearance in the sun; for they are covered with brilliant colours, and contrast with the rudeness of the dwellings of the Aryas. The companions, therefore, direct their steps towards one of the houses which appears to them more spacious and better ornamented than the others, and is surrounded by a

garden. But when they wish to enter the enclosure they are received with a shower of stones.

"What thinkest thou of the manners of these hideous creatures?" said Epergos to his companion.

"I think that when you fall in with wild beasts, the best thing is to go away before they bite you; we have nothing to do here, let us go back."

"Nay, not so fast, we must know how creatures so savage in appearance make themselves dwellings which indicate refined manners. Our aim must be to discover the means of getting in."

At that moment there appeared at the door of the habitation a native of unwieldy corpulence. He appeared scarcely able to keep on his legs, and leaned on two young boys for support. A third was opening a large parasol to shade his large head, sunk between his shoulders, from the heat of the sun.

"What do you want?" said he to the two companions.

"To see thy house," answered Epergos. "It has appeared to us the most beautiful of all."

"Who are you? What do you bring?" returned the corpulent proprietor of the house.

"We bring health and long life, and cure infirmities," Epergos quickly replied.

"If thou speakest truth, come in, then, for I have need of you," said the fat man, softening his voice; "but what proof have I that you are not seeking to deceive me?"

"We are very much older than thou, and yet thou seest that we appear young and active; we will tell thee our secret."

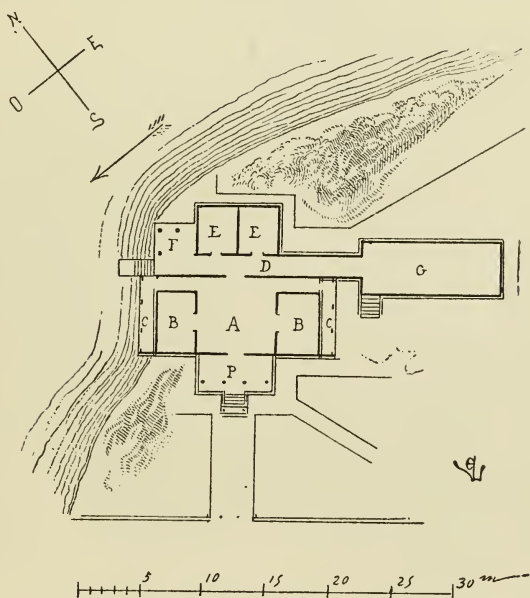
"Then you are welcome."

"What new folly is this?" whispered Doxius to his

companion. "Art thou then a God, to promise health and long life?"

"Do not interfere with me; this deformed creature will be satisfied with us, and I shall have seen what I am desirous of seeing."

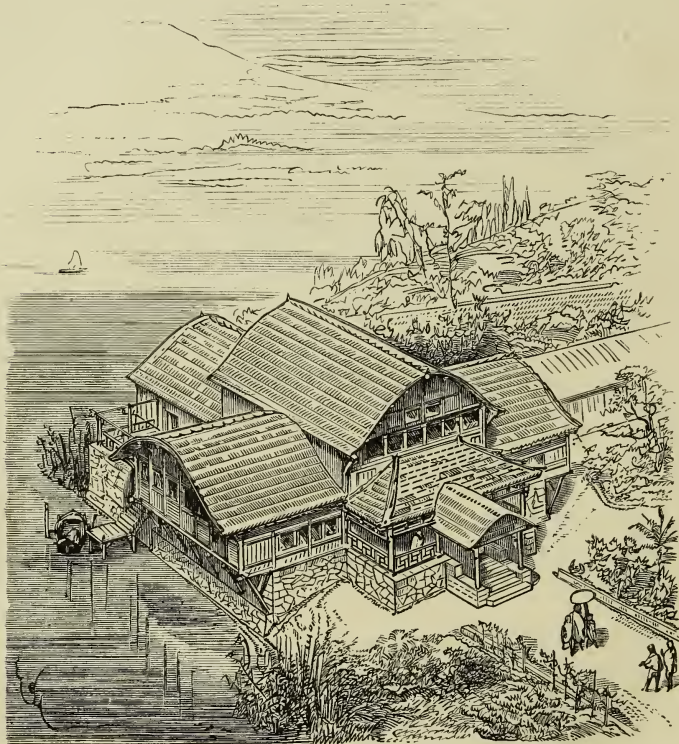
The house of the fat Fau (the name given to him by his servants), surrounded by shrubs and fruit trees, consisted of a portico raised a few steps above the ground (fig. 9).



Plan of the Primitive Chinese House.—FIG. 9.

This porch P, very low and deep, gave entrance into a central room A, lofty, and lighted near the wooden roof which covered it, by openings furnished with a trellis-work of canes. On this room opened two side rooms B, very much less in height, and a narrow passage which led right and left to two covered balconies projecting on brackets C. One of these overlooked the river. Behind this gallery

another wider one D led on to a terrace F, to two small chambers E E, and to a long low building G, allotted to the servants and the offices, such as the kitchen and provision stores. On the terrace F were posts from which mats might be hung, enabling the occupants to enjoy the fresh air of the river under cover. A small landing-stage



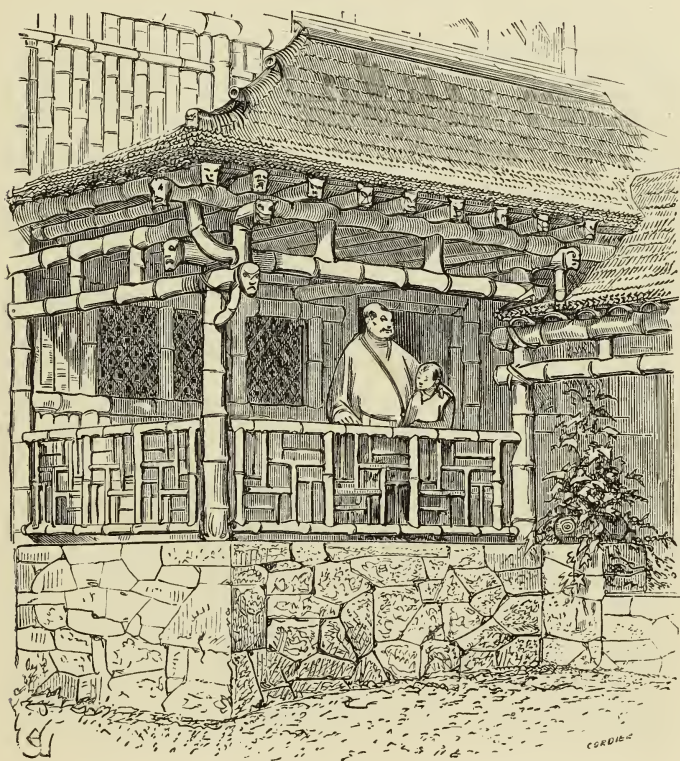
View of the House.—FIG. 10.

descended from this terrace to the river to facilitate excursions on the water.

This building was constructed entirely of bamboos. Trellis-work of cane, tastefully composed, closed all the openings and allowed the air to circulate, while it subdued

the glare of the sunlight. We give (fig. 10) the view of this habitation on the entrance side, and (fig. 11) the aspect of the porch.

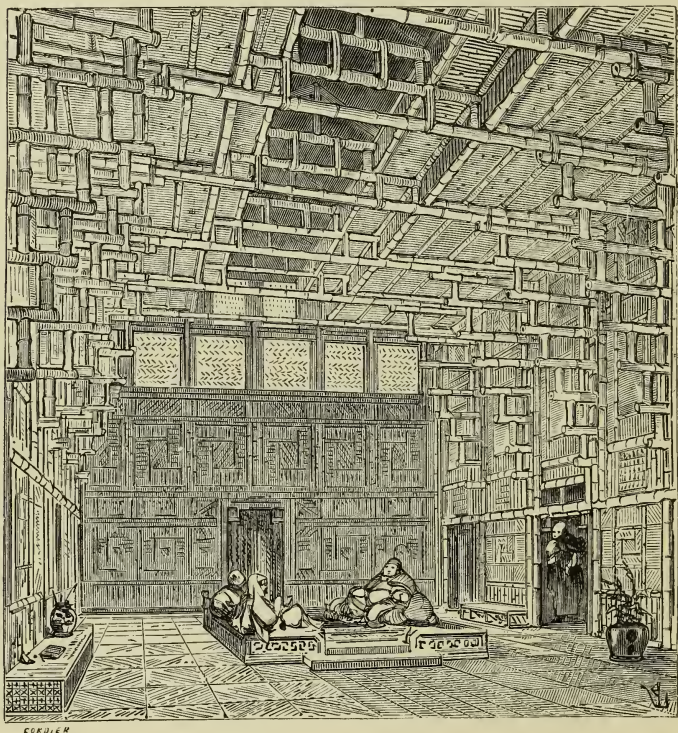
Great roofs, made of thick bamboos, bent, and covered with reeds very ingeniously disposed, sheltered the interior from the rain and heat; for these coverings were thick.



Porch of the House.—FIG. 11.

Close mats, made likewise of reeds, enabled the openings to be hermetically closed during the night, and covered the floor. The building rested on a base consisting of large stones, perfectly fitting, though irregular. The whole was

painted outside and inside with lively colours, among which yellow and green predominated. On being introduced into the principal room, whose aspect was cheerful, and whose agreeable temperature contrasted with the oppressive heat of the outer air, Epergos examined with curiosity the arrangement of the bamboos which formed the lofty ceiling, lighted by openings pierced



Interior of the Chinese House.—FIG. 12.

above the entrance and on the side opposite (fig. 12). His examination would have been continued had not the fat Fau invited his guests to seat themselves on thick mats which covered a sort of platform raised in the

middle of the apartment. He let down his own ponderous weight upon a heap of bags filled with aromatic herbs. Having taken breath—for the effort he had made to go as far as the door had impeded his respiration—he ordered his servants to bring some strong drinks; then addressing his visitors, said: “What brings you into the Celestial Country?”

“The wish to be of service to the noblest order of human beings,” answered Epergos. “We have visited many countries, and it is here alone that we have seen beings who knew how to erect dwellings which do not remind one of the dens of wild beasts or the most ordinary birds’ nests. While we observe that in the depths of the sea the humble molluscs build themselves substantial dwellings adorned with bright colours, we have not been able to understand how the most intelligent among animated beings should not have been able to make themselves shelters, or have possessed only mean abodes. We have been informed, however, that in these vast and fertile plains, watered by great rivers, lived people that were superior to the rest of mankind by their industry and their intelligence; but that these privileged beings, the kings of the earth, are subject to infirmities and evils of every kind. Skilful in the art of curing these evils, and able to give relief to those who are afflicted by these infirmities, we have come hither. Make use of us, then, and put our knowledge to the test.”

“You see,” returned Fau, “I can scarcely walk a few steps without gasping for breath.”

“Hast thou always been thus afflicted?”

“No; I used to be vigorous and active; I feared neither wind nor rain, nor sun; I slept soundly the whole night through; and food, however coarse, seemed savoury to me. Now, I cannot sleep; or if I doze, I soon wake up,

imagining that a heavy stone is weighing on my chest. The most appetising viands seem to me tasteless."

"And when thou wast in good health, didst thou inhabit this charming abode?"

"Oh! certainly not; I had neither house nor garden. I worked hard all day to obtain a dish of rice which appeared to me a very small portion. Nevertheless, this persistent labour enabled me to acquire some little property. For a long time I traded on the river, living in a boat, buying and selling to such advantage, that one day I found myself rich enough to purchase this domain. Since that time I have employed others to work for me, and have rested myself, hoping to enjoy the wealth so laboriously amassed. But health has gone from me, and the rest I anticipated in this house, built under my own inspection, is only a protracted torture."

"Certain drinks and herbs, whose virtues are known to us, will relieve thee; but first show us this house, for it is worth while to know whether it is not the cause of thy affliction."

The small eyes of the fat Fau then rested upon Epergos and Doxius with so marked an expression of distrust that the first resumed:

"If thou mistrust us, say so openly, and we will leave thee to thy misery."

"Stay," replied the Fau immediately; "you shall see the house at your leisure, when you have eaten and drunk." Then the attendants brought a vessel filled with a warm beverage, and some spiced cakes.

"This," said Epergos, after tasting one of the cakes, "is scarcely fit even for people in health, but would soon bring thee to death. Instead, therefore, of this aromatic beverage, send for some pure water. In order that the remedy we shall give thee to-night may be effectual, it is

necessary for thee to abstain all day from anything but clear water."

Fau was scarcely capable of showing his domain to his visitors. The steward of his household was commissioned to conduct them everywhere. Epergos was able at last to examine at his leisure every corner of this abode, except the room where the wife and daughter of his host were shut up. It was one of those which opened on the large room. At every step Epergos uttered an exclamation. The bamboo framing supporting the roofing of

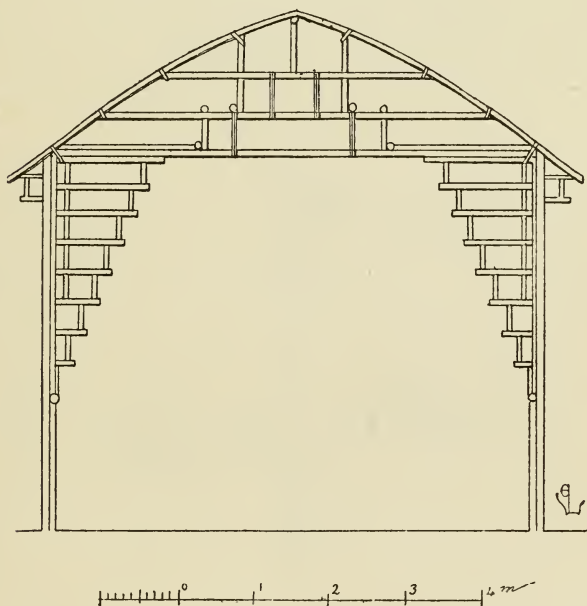


Diagram of the Chinese structure.—FIG. 13.

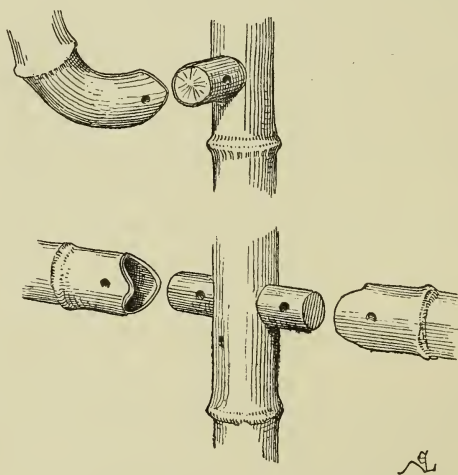
the principal apartment, was the chief subject of his remarks (fig. 13).

"See," said he to his companion, "how with materials apparently so weak, these men have succeeded in making a large roof as light as it is strong. How cleverly these

brackets are managed! how freely does the air circulate in these rooms to prevent the discomfort caused by the heat of the climate!"

But Doxius scarcely raised his eyes, and appeared to take but little interest in all that Epergos showed him. The framework of the structure consisted entirely of bamboos of various thicknesses, intersecting and bracing at the same time in the simplest and strongest manner.

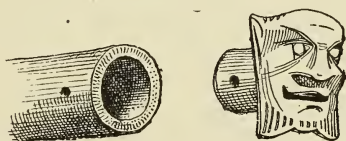
Seeing how all the parts of this house held together, Epergos asked himself how it was that all human beings had not discovered combinations so naturally suggested, and requiring so little intellectual effort. He studied with particular attention some of the bamboo framings presented



Bamboo framing.—FIG. 14.

in figure 14. To connect these canes at right angles, the builder had put crosswise, through one of them, a cylindrical piece of wood, which fitted, as a tenon would do, into the cylindrical cavities of the bamboos to be framed together; these pieces were secured by pegs.

He saw that the light canes which composed the balustrades of the portico were joined according to the same method, and he perceived that the rudely carved heads which finished the ends of the horizontal pieces of the porch outside were merely a kind of cork fitted into the cylindrical cavities of those pieces (fig. 15).



Ornamentation of the Bamboo ends.—FIG. 15.

Reflection, however, suggested to Epergos that for the origination of the idea of so framing these canes of various length and thickness, the first condition was the possession of the materials. But no vegetable growth of this kind was to be found among the mountains inhabited by the Aryas, for example; and if they possessed them, the climate of those altitudes was too severe to allow of such structures affording a shelter. In these vast and humid plains, on the contrary, these open-work habitations were the most suitable ones. He communicated these reflections to Doxius, who did not fail to insist upon it that all would be for the best, and in its place in the world, if he, Epergos, did not constantly interfere to disturb the established order of things.

"Is it part of the established order of things," replied Epergos, "that our host should become so excessively corpulent, and be unable to take three steps without gasping for breath? Would it not be better that he should be like thee and me? And does not this diseased

condition result from a luxurious and indolent life, following on an active and laborious existence?"

"Perhaps; but how does that concern thee?"

"It matters, perhaps, little to me in itself; but you cannot hinder me from observing and drawing conclusions from what I observe. Now, I am sure that in the mountainous and inclement countries which we lately visited, we nowhere met human monstrosities like our host; and yet, those mountaineers do not live a life of ease. Their habitations compared to this are mere dens."

"Well then, I am right. This 'better,' towards which thou seemest to be urging these human beings, is out of the natural order of things, and does but hurry them to the tomb."

"On that point, I have certain views of my own. But answer me, Doxius; it appears to be the established order of things that these human beings, contrary to what is the case with the brutes, have the desire and the means for improving their places of shelter; how then could they be restrained from attempting these improvements,—from directing their intelligence towards that 'better' which they dimly conceive,—without disturbing that established law?" To this question Doxius made no reply; and their host at that moment sent to invite them to partake of the evening meal.

The wife and daughter of Fau had then come out of their room, and were standing behind the master, who was squatting down on mats, his arms resting on a kind of small bamboo trestles artistically worked. Before him was placed a low wide shelf, covered with fine matting on which were arranged bowls, bottles of glazed earthenware, and a quantity of small articles unknown to the visitors. In the middle a large open vessel contained steaming rice, with which were mingled pieces of fish. As soon as the

strangers had been brought in, and seated on mats arranged by the servants; the latter hastened to fill the bowls by means of long ladles. The master, taking two small sticks, which he used with dexterity, despite his obesity, rapidly conveyed the rice to his mouth. Epergos and Doxius had great difficulty in imitating his example, and were obliged to use their fingers to empty their bowl. Next they served each of the party with a warm beverage in delicately thin vessels. Then they brought fish cooked with herbs, and roasted birds. But the visitors had satisfied their hunger.

"Now is the time," said Epergos to Fau, "when it will be well to begin the curative process that is to restore thy health. Leave all these viands to thy servants, and let us talk, if it is agreeable to thee. We have admired thy habitation and thy gardens; but when one possesses such an abode, one is little disposed to leave it. Dost thou ever go out?"

"How can I?" answered Fau; "I have scarcely strength to take a few steps in my garden."

"To-morrow morning at sunrise, take twenty steps; thou wilt take thirty the day after, eating but little; forty the day after that, not eating more; and so for some days in succession; and at the end of twenty days, thou wilt be in a condition to make an excursion outside. I saw a boat moored at the portico; well, thou wilt get into it and impel it thyself, having a servant to help thee when thou art tired. Gradually restore to thy body the habit of exercise and work which it has lost; this is the only means of recovering health."

Fau fixed his small black eyes on Epergos. "Is it to mock me that thou hast come to my house?" said he; "thou art then no magician! I am an old fool for having listened to thee. Away with thee! if thou hadst not

eaten in my house, I would make thee repent of thy impertinence."

"So," said Doxius, when he and his companion had quitted the house, "thou hast gained nothing for thy pains here ; and now thou art gone, things will remain as we found them."

"I have not lost any time," replied Epergos ; "I have left here words of truth. If the fat Fau does not profit by them himself, art thou sure that his wife, children, and servants will forget them?"



CHAPTER V.

THE EMIGRANTS.

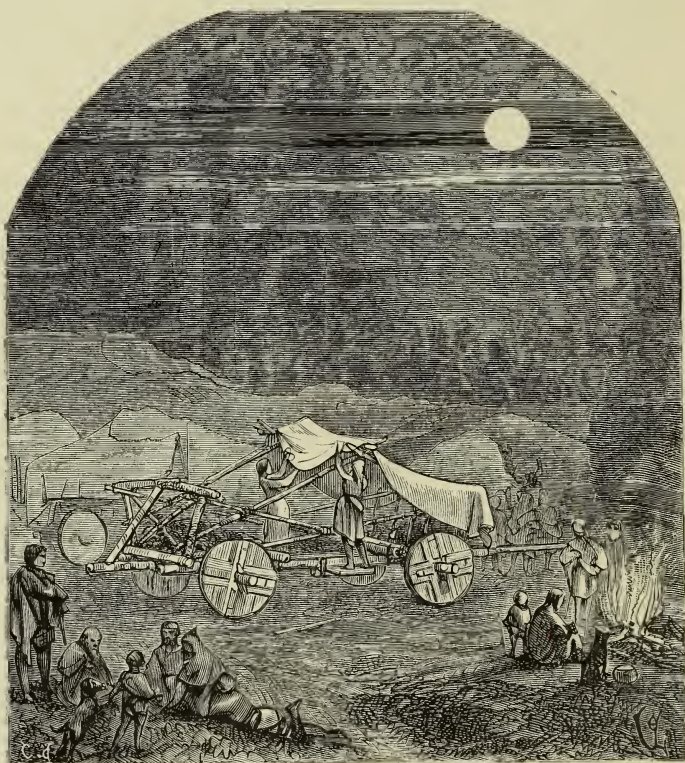
THE sun was sinking on the horizon. At the entrance of a wide valley on an undulating plain were to be seen a long train of men on foot and on horseback, coming down the lower slopes of the mountains through the woodlands and prairies; behind them were heavy waggons drawn by oxen, and filled with women, children, and furniture; while a dense body of horsemen brought up the rear.

The men in the rear of the column came to a stand in a wide turfy glade, formed in a circle, and gradually the waggons and their escort reached the centre, and were ranged in several lines. The horses were tied to trees or to stakes driven in the ground. The women and children got down from the waggons, and without losing time, set to work to prepare the evening meal. Fires were quickly lighted between the waggons, while the men took the yokes off their teams, and allowed the oxen to graze. The air was still, and the smoke from the various fires rose slowly to the sky like so many grey columns. The last rays of the sun gilded only the tops of the mountains, and the valley was already plunged in the blue shades of evening. Grave songs with long-drawn notes then rose from every quarter of the opening, and shortly after the company separated into groups around the fires.

The meal finished, night had supervened, and far away towards the extremity of the valley only a few summits

still retained a purple tint. The moon was rising, and the night was mild. In the centre of the camp the emigrants assembled, and one of their number, mounted on a waggon, turning towards the star which appeared on the crest of the farthest hill to his left, gave out with a powerful voice a sacred hymn, commencing thus :

“The moon, pursuing her flight through the billows of



The Aryan Waggon.—FIG. 16.

air, moves onwards in the sky. O beams of day, with golden trail, the eye cannot trace your path!" . . .

The people repeated each strophe in a full and simple melody.

When the hymn was finished, the women covered the waggons with woollen stuffs (fig. 16), and each family having retired within these movable dwellings, silence reigned in the camp.

A small body of men were watching around the glade, and keeping up a circle of fires, conversing in a low voice.

"Since we left our mountains we have not yet come up with the Dasyus; are they still at a considerable distance?"

"They are in the plain," returned another; "perhaps we shall see them to-morrow. They live there amid the riches of a fertile soil,—those unclean beings; we will drive them away; we will take possession of the ground which they defile, for they are incapable of defending themselves against the Aryas; or we will make them work for our families. In these rich plains, we shall no longer have to protect ourselves against the snow; there will be no more long winters, no more devastating torrents."

The first speaker was, however, looking in the direction of the mountain and sighing: "Wilt thou believe me," said he at last to his companion, "it seems to me as if, when we left our mountain gorges, so difficult to descend, and where we had to help our waggons along with our arms, I had left a part of my own being up there; sadness overcomes me at sight of this boundless plain, and I seem to pant for air."

"We could not go back to our mountains; we have been vanquished by the great families from the North; they came down upon our pastures, and spread devastation everywhere when we tried to drive them back. More numerous than ourselves, these men were holding us in bondage. We are not made for subjection; we therefore had to leave our dwellings. Cease thy regrets. When a

child, I came down with my father who used to sell wool in these happy plains, where grow trees loaded with fruit, where the rivers flow gently through the shades; where man never suffers either from hunger or cold. The Dasyus have large and well-built houses, and flocks and herds in plenty. When all these possessions become ours, thou wilt forget thy hut on the mountain."

CHAPTER VI.

EARLIEST SETTLEMENTS OF THE ARYAS ON THE UPPER AFFLUENTS OF THE INDUS.

THE earliest emigrants who descended the slopes of the Himalayas found the region occupied by a race of men of yellow complexion, destitute of energy; and had no difficulty in subjugating them. Of great stature, handsome and brave, the Aryas presented themselves amidst these coloured peoples like superior beings, born to command; and despite their number, the effort to resist was soon abandoned. Industrial occupations were, however, more fully developed in the plain among these peoples of inferior race than in the mountains. They worked metals, had a considerable stock of tools, fashioned wood, and knew how to make bricks and work stone. They employed painting to embellish their dwellings, and wove linen, cotton, and woollen stuffs of very fine texture, which they skilfully dyed.

When all efforts at resistance had been suppressed, the Aryas began to think of settling permanently in the conquered lands. But the dwellings of the conquered race, constructed of bricks and canes, light and unsubstantial, were unsuited to the new-comers, who required substantial weather-proof houses, capable on occasion of resisting attack.

The predilection for durability, innate in the Arya, was intolerant of dwellings which a puff of wind might carry away. They compelled the natives, therefore, to

erect habitations for them more durable than those of the country ; but disdaining manual labour, they gave only general orders, involving conditions of increased stability—leaving their execution to the natives. The latter were therefore obliged to make use of the forms with which they were acquainted, while employing stronger materials and a more durable system of structure. And such is the force of habit, that the new-comers insisted on the reproduction of certain appearances with which they were familiar, and which reminded them of the old houses they had abandoned. In their native mountains the Aryas scarcely used any material in building but dry stones and small unsquared trunks of trees ; the races among whom they settled built with pise and with canes. This pise was only a coarse concrete of mud and small pebbles rammed between wicker-work, and which, dried in the sun, acquired a certain degree of solidity. The basement thus formed, the natives erected upon it light timber framing, whose open spaces were filled in with canes which they plastered with the same mud mixed with straw ; so that these habitations presented the appearance shown in figure 17. The timbers remaining visible were painted, as well as the ends of the roofing, which greatly overhung the walls in order to shelter them well. This, however, did not appear to the Aryas a sufficiently substantial structure, or the dwellings thus built worthy to house them.

They insisted on having walls built of stone or of substantial timber-work, solid, like that of their mountain homes, and better than walls made of reeds covered with thin plastering ; accustomed as they were to dwell within walls of piled-up trunks of trees firmly joined at the corners. The wretched natives had great difficulty in satisfying the requirements of their new masters, inasmuch as the latter were perfectly able to tell what they did *not*

want, while they but vaguely explained what they actually desired. Accordingly, in spite of blows, the new buildings were raised with difficulty, and were often abandoned by the workmen, who themselves also emigrated, being unable



House of the Primitive Inhabitant of the Upper Indus.—FIG. 17

to satisfy the whims of the new-comers. The country thus became gradually depopulated; and the Aryas, in order to keep men to work for them, found themselves obliged to confine the inhabitants that remained, and to take from them the few horses they possessed. The poor people were divided into classes; some had to till the ground, others to tend the cattle, and the most intelligent,

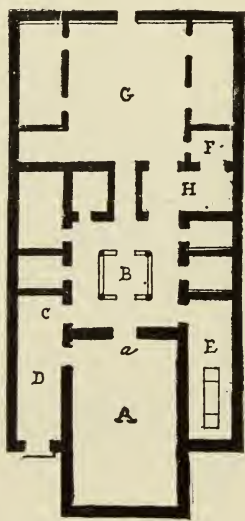
or those who already followed some industrial calling, were compelled to work at buildings, the weaving of stuffs, and the manufacture of implements and utensils. To each family of the Aryas was apportioned a certain number of these natives, with the obligation to look after them and make them work. If any of them attempted to escape, the Aryas immediately mounted their horses in pursuit; he was soon brought back and imprisoned, receiving for a week or two more blows than food. After a year of this treatment the cases of flight had become very rare, and the natives appeared resigned to their fate. All the results of their labour, whether in cultivating the ground or in other industrial pursuits, belonged by right to the Arya families; who from that time took upon themselves to provide food and raiment for their serfs.

As a result of this social condition the dwellings of the conquerors might soon be seen rising amidst the huts inhabited by the natives attached to their service. Their huts were of the most humble appearance, but were built according to the methods adopted by the natives; while the houses of their masters had a more durable aspect, although their structure resembled in some of its forms that of the aboriginal dwellings, especially in the arrangement of the roofing. Moreover, the Aryas vied with each other as to which should have the most spacious and beautiful house. After some years' sojourn in this land, that equality of condition, which had in great measure existed among the families of the conquerors, was no longer to be found. Those whose chiefs were active, vigorous, and intelligent, knowing well how to govern the domain of which they had become the possessors, and to manage their serfs so as to render their condition supportable, beheld their wealth increase to the detriment of the families whose chiefs did not take such pains or

display such energy. The latter, unable to support their slaves, were obliged to part with some of them, and with the portions of land on which they lived; for the soil and the serf who lived on it went together.

After twenty years' sojourn of the new-comers in this fertile territory, there might, therefore, be reckoned about a dozen great families distinguished by their power and riches from the remainder who were less fortunate, though in the assemblies they had equal rights in deciding on matters under discussion. But whether spacious or small, the Aryan dwellings were all built on the same plan.

They invariably consisted of a large hall in which the family and their neighbours assembled, and an interior court, more or less spacious, sometimes surrounded by porticos, beneath which opened the bedrooms. These habitations were closed on the outside; for the Aryas, surrounded by serfs whom they could not trust, did not wish to be overlooked by the curious, or their dwellings rendered too easily accessible. An outer enclosure contained the cattle-sheds, the stables, and the quarters for the servants attached to the house, with barns and provision stores.



Plan of House of the Aryas settled on the Upper Indus.—FIG. 18.

Figure 18 presents the plan of one of the largest and best arranged of these houses. At A, the hall entered by two doors—one from the outside, the other from the inner court. From this large hall there

is no communication with the habitation except by the second door *a*. At B is the interior court with its portico, and the bed-chambers all round. The entrance to the dwelling part is at C, with the apartment D, in which the chief daily receives the people from without.

At E is the consecrated part, reserved for sacrificial rites, and where the family treasure is deposited; for at that time the head of the family used to perform amid



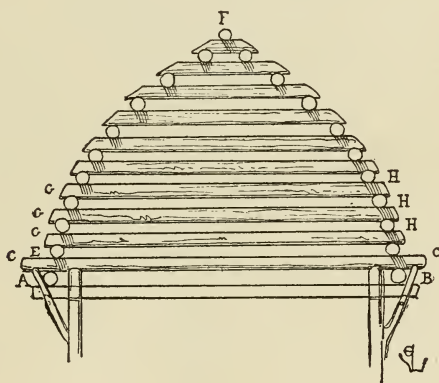
View of House of the Aryas settled on the Upper Indus.—FIG. 19.

his household the three religious ceremonies of the day: the first at sunrise, the second when the sun was at its highest, and the third at the setting of the star that

generates life. At G is the outer court with its wall, its special gate, and the stables, servants' quarters and store-rooms, a small room at F for the preparation of food, and at H the room in which the family meet to take their meals.

Fine trees surround this dwelling, which is built of stone and timber, and of which figure 19 presents the external aspect on the side of the great hall. But we must enter somewhat into detail respecting the mixed system of construction employed.

The master of this habitation had determined that all the lower part towards the outside should be built of stone. For this purpose he had employed a part of his serfs in quarrying blocks of stone along the neighbouring limestone hills; these blocks were brought to the site on waggons drawn by oxen. On this basement was erected,



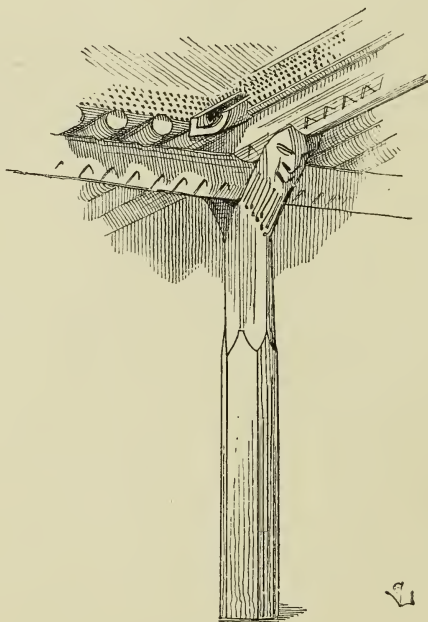
Gable Framing of Unhewn Timbers.—FIG. 20.

to form the upper part of the great hall, a framing of heavy timber-work; and on this box a roof constructed according to the method shown in figure 20.

Upon the upper wall-plates AB, were laid cross-timbers

CC; on these the side-pieces E, then other shorter cross-timbers G, side-pieces H, and so on up to the ridge F. Thus were obtained gables of open-work at either end and one midway, thoroughly strong. To the side-pieces were fastened long poles, and on these reeds lengthwise,—then a thick layer of rushes thatched according to the method adopted by the natives, so that the rain could not penetrate this roofing.

The same procedure was adopted for the buildings designed for habitation,—that is to say, with a series of open-work gables or *lean-to's*. The supports of the portico were made of trunks of trees forked at the top,



Forked Post.—FIG. 21.

as shown in figure 21; and as the master of the house was rich, and had serfs skilled in the art of working

wood, instead of leaving these trunks in the rough, he had them wrought as richly as possible, so that this portico presented a very striking appearance, and was considered by all an excellent work.

The doorways left in the stone basement were made of two planks meeting at the top so as to form triangular openings, perfectly strong, and whose inclined jambs were enclosed by the walls made of irregular blocks carefully fitted, according to the method used by the Aryas in their mountain home. The partitions separating the rooms consisted merely of coarse trellis-work of canes on which were hung skins of beasts. The repasts were prepared in the smaller hall F (fig. 18), as stated above, and the family took their meals in the apartment H, opening on the portico.

The bedchambers were lighted only by the doorways opening on the portico, and the great hall by the openings left in the upper timber framing, these openings being closed only by wicker-work.

Vâmadevâ, the master of this beautiful residence, which was surrounded by some thirty huts inhabited by his serfs—was a tall old man. His white beard, his clear blue eyes, his wide forehead which, in spite of his years, was still unwrinkled, his tall and erect stature and noble bearing, imposed respect on equals as well as dependants. Although he had enriched himself at the expense of his neighbours, he never failed to help them in distress; he therefore enjoyed a considerable influence in the deliberative assemblies, and was consulted on all matters under discussion. His great hall could readily accommodate two hundred persons, and it was one of the places where the Aryas liked to assemble; for the speech of the master was persuasive, and he had the art of bringing over others to his own opinion. On certain occasions, therefore, banquets were held in this hall, which were prolonged far into the

night; for abundance had corrupted the sober habits of the Aryan mountaineers. They abstained, however, from certain kinds of food, swine's flesh in particular; and did not drink any of the fermented liquors that had long been in use among the natives, and with which they sometimes intoxicated themselves. The women never appeared at these banquets, but lived in the inner apartments of the houses, working at textile fabrics and making clothes for the family, or superintending the servants, bringing up the children, and preparing the meals of the family. To the young girls was specially assigned the task of milking the cows and pouring the milk into vessels, either for drink or food. They had also to gather the plant *sôma*, and to extract from it the liquor used in ceremonial rites.

On one of those festal occasions the whole Aryan colony had been abroad since the morning, and were on their way to Vâmadevâ's dwelling. It was a beautiful day in spring, clear and serene. The men were to be seen dressed in clothing of brilliant white, their heads covered with fur caps, their limbs swathed round with strips of woollen stuff, and sandals on their feet,—advancing slowly in small bodies conversing among themselves, while the women and children were following them, laughing and singing. The women were dressed in fine fabrics of white wool covered with embroidery of various colours. Their arms and faces, being uncovered, showed the whiteness of their skin.

Buskins made of lambs' fleeces protected their feet and legs; and through their long transparent veils their fawn-coloured locks, adorned with beads of gold, were sufficiently visible. As for the children, they were running from one group to the other almost naked.

Vâmadevâ was to celebrate at noon the marriage of his

granddaughter to a young man of the neighbourhood. In front of his dwelling a vast enclosure had been formed with clods of turf and branches. In the midst of the circular enclosure rose a slightly elevated mound on which was placed a flat stone.

While awaiting the ceremony, the Aryas stood in groups around the enclosure without entering it; and the family of Vâmadevâ distributed cakes, curdled milk, parched corn, and water.

The sun was reaching the zenith when Vâmadevâ came out of his house and appeared in the centre of the enclosure, followed by his wife and daughters bearing the sacrificial vessels containing the liquor of the *sôma*, butter, and dry herbs. When the sacred fire of Agni was kindled on the mound, the old man turned towards the flame pronouncing an invocation to the celestial powers. The bride then advanced, followed at some distance by her guards of honour and the two families further in the rear. At this spectacle the murmurs of the crowd suddenly ceased, and amid the most profound silence, the young girl pronounced these words in a voice clear as the song of the lark: "Father! I ask to be united to Nêma, son of Gotôma!"

"Sûryâ," replied the old man, "advances, dressed in a splendid robe, to be united to Sôma. The hand has formed her attire, the eye has superintended the dressing of her hair, heaven and earth have furnished her adornment now that Sûryâ comes to meet her spouse. The Açwins are her two guards of honour, Agni is her messenger. Sôma has desired Sûryâ for his wife; the two Açwins were her guards of honour when Savitri gave him as a husband to his daughter, who is made happy by this choice.

"O Açwins, when you came in your three-wheeled car to ask for Sôma the hand of Sûryâ, all the gods

applauded, and Pûsân, son of heaven and of earth, adorned the two nearest relatives."

The bridegroom advanced in his turn and took his place at the young girl's side; addressing the latter, Vâmadevâ said to her: "I take her away from paternal authority to place her under that of a husband. May she be fortunate, O beneficent Indra, and have many children!" An acclamation from the crowd followed these words, and the husband then taking the hand of the young woman, the grandfather continued: "May thy family increase in our house. Awake for the fire of the hearth!" Then the bride let fall her ornaments which covered her dress, and appeared to the assembly still more beautiful under the long white robe that enveloped her.

Nêmâ, taking the hand of his wife once more, said to her with a loud voice: "I take thy hand for our happiness; I wish that thou shouldst be my wife and grow old with me. All the gods have given thee to me, who am the fire of the hearth."

Then Vâmadevâ turning towards the assembly, exclaimed, "May this spouse be happy! Approach her; look at her. Express to her your good wishes, and return to your dwellings."

Epergos and Doxius were mingled in the crowd. While attentively observing the details of the ceremony, Epergos remarked to his companion: "Our mountaineers have remarkably advanced in refinement, dost thou not think so?"

"Too much!" replied Doxius: "look at these capacious dwellings, these splendid dresses; listen to these invocations: one step more and these men will have become corrupted by luxury and vanity, if they are not so already. Who is this man that addresses the celestial powers and seems to speak in their name?"

“It is the grandfather of the bride; is there any one more interested than he in securing for his granddaughter the good-will of these powers?”

“Who assures thee that he is worthy to address them?”

“Who tells thee that he is not so?”

“These Aryas have already reduced to slavery men who were feebler than themselves, and whom they ought to have protected! . . .”

And thus, engaged in controversy as usual, Epergos and Doxius found themselves, at the termination of the ceremony, close behind the steps of Vâmadevâ. He, perceiving that they were strangers, invited them to enter his dwelling to rest and recruit themselves.

CHAPTER VII.

*HOW DOXIUS AND EPERGOS RESPECTIVELY EMPLOYED
THEMSELVES AMONG THE ARYAS SETTLED ON THE
UPPER INDUS.*

DURING their abode among this colony of Aryas, Epergos and Doxius employed their time differently. The former was always visiting the workmen, with a view to ascertain their methods of procedure. Doxius used to spend his days among the old men, and would converse with them respecting their beliefs and religious rites.

Epergos was not sparing of advice to the natives he saw at work ; and the latter, naturally docile, listened to him with respect. He indicated to them the means of improving their tools, both in forging them and increasing their cutting action by hammering the metal and sharpening their edges on certain stones which were to be found in the neighbourhood, and which were in fact sandstones. Thus they began to cut timber more readily, and to join pieces of wood more skilfully.

One of the chief Aryas who, until then, had been contented with a somewhat rude dwelling, having acquired wealth by breeding large herds of cattle, wished to have a sumptuous residence built for him, and sent for the most capable workmen among his serfs and among those of his neighbours, to whom he was to pay so much per head for their services.

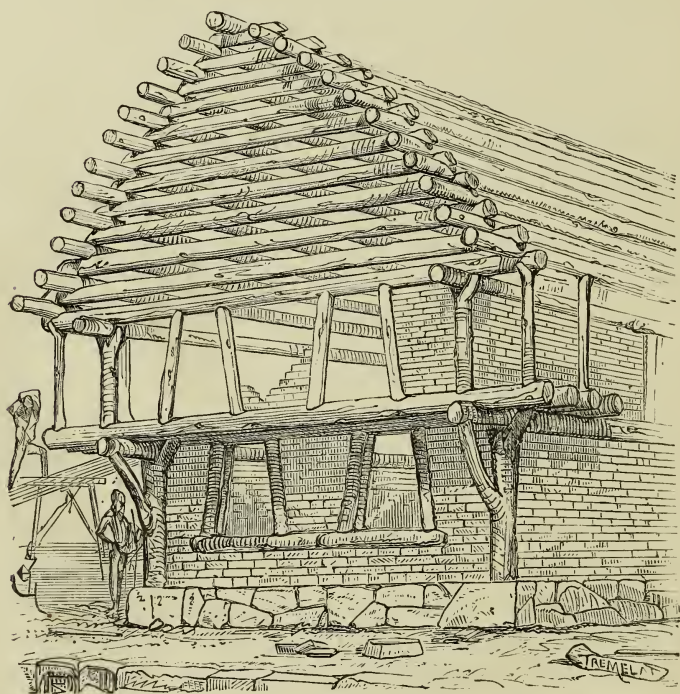
Remembering what he had seen in the fat Fau's house, and the ingenious methods of construction adopted by builders among the yellow race in their bamboo dwellings, Epergos thought that they might take advantage of these methods in the timber-work of the new building ; for those which he observed appeared to him coarse and heavy, and falling short of the advantages which the use of timber affords.

Epergos called to mind the balconies projecting outwards, and thought that if such results could be obtained with bamboos, they might be still more easily secured with the help of resinous substances of a more durable and solid nature. He reflected also that, in any case, if in future buildings they should have to be less lavish of wood,—since they would have to go far to cut it,—they would lose less time, and the inhabitant would be sooner able to occupy his house.

The plan of the new habitation did not differ from that given in figure 18 ; but an advantage was gained by making the upper part of the building project over the lower parts, so as to give more shelter to the latter, and by introducing those projecting galleries which present so many conveniences within and without, as was seen in the fat Fau's house. Following the advice of Epergos therefore, the builder arranged the front or gable of the principal hall as indicated in figure 22. They found in the forest two trunks of trees each presenting a fork and a strong branch in front. These trunks formed the main supports of the exterior front of the great hall ; so that the horizontal beams which fitted into the forks were relieved at their extremities by the third anterior branch. Thus on the projection of these beams, firmly supported, a transverse piece of wood could be placed, on which two other posts likewise forked at the head could be raised, which would

receive the two horizontal pieces terminating the building laterally. It only remained to place on these timbers those forming the roof and gables, according to the preceding method. This arrangement allowed a projecting tier or story to be raised above the ground-floor.

But the Aryas, perhaps, as a souvenir of their mountain homes, or in order to keep a stricter watch over the dwell-



Building of Overhanging Unwrought Timber Framing.—FIG. 22.

ings of their serfs, were anxious that their houses should rise above the natural level of the plain. They, therefore, raised a platform of rammed earth, and the building was erected on this platform.

The lower parts of the building being henceforth perfectly sheltered by the projection of the upper framing, it was decided with regard to these, that they should dispense with those stone walls, which required much labour and time, and content themselves with walls made of clay bricks, dried in the sun, for the parts above the plinth, which was constructed of blocks of stone.

"Why," said Doxius to his companion, while the building was in progress, "should you thus disturb the natural order of things, and support a great and wide body upon a narrow base? The inhabitants had at least the good sense to raise buildings firmly seated on their foundations, while you are prompting them to reverse the order of things. Are mountains wider at their summits than at their base?"

"Mountains," replied Epergos, "are mountains, not houses. . . . Are not trees wider above their branches than at the bottom of their trunks? And since these people are building with wood, is it not quite natural that they should adopt the principle it suggests—that is, widen their construction like the tree, whose branches diverge from the trunk as they rise? Did we not see in the country of the yellow race houses built solely of bamboos, and which had those exterior overhangings so favourable to the comfort of the inmates—so well adapted to effectually preserve the lower part of the building?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Doxius, "and, among others, the house of the fat Fau who so courteously showed us the door. Such ideas could not have originated except in the heads of such fools; and if this is what you are undertaking to teach the men of this country who have more sense, you are spending your time to very questionable purpose. If they have the modicum of wisdom which

they seem to possess, they will disapprove of your plans." The building, however, continued to advance.

Doxius had undertaken a very different task. In the conversations he had held with some of the old men among the Aryas, he had expressed himself profoundly struck with the grandeur of their religious system, and had intimated to them his fear lest the purity of their worship should be corrupted. "It is indeed a noble sight to behold the chief of the family, surrounded by those dependent on him, place himself every day in relation with the powers that govern the universe; but do you not fear that with time those traditions will be corrupted,—that there will be negligence and forgetfulness in following them, and that many will attempt innovations? . . . and then, what will become of dogmatic truth? what will become of religious rites? To preserve them in their purity, the doctrine and the ritual should be taught and practised by those among you who are most respected; who would transmit the tradition from one generation to another with rigorous exactitude, subjecting themselves to special tests of knowledge, and so not allowing the profane to know, interpret, or hand down sacred things."

After such discourses the old men would remain for a time plunged in thought, and would deliberate respecting them. On another occasion Doxius said to them:

"Each father of a family sacrifices in his own dwelling; do you know how he comports himself on such occasions? Do you know whether he does not deviate from the truth? Would it not be better to practise the ceremonial in places set apart for the purpose, and in the presence of persons invested with a sacred character by a special council—a college of conservators of doctrine?"

These reasons, and others which we omit, seemed to

produce an impression on the venerable persons to whom Doxius presented them.

When the house was finished, its wealthy owner was desirous of assembling in it, according to custom, the most distinguished of the Aryas. This building, which, both in its exterior and interior, presented certain innovations, did not approve itself to the taste of the oldest; while the younger part of the assembly got Epergos to explain to them the improvements recommended by him, and carried out according to his instructions. Opinion was therefore divided; and, as was the custom in such cases among the men of this race, the discussion assumed the character of a regular deliberation. When they had examined everything, the master of the house, who had soon become aware of the diversity of opinion, having sent round refreshments, consisting of cakes of meal and honey and curdled milk placed in the middle of the hall, spoke thus to his guests:

"You have visited this abode; it exhibits a structure which has been hitherto not customary among the Aryas. I thought I did well to seek for novel arrangements, adapted to render the life of man more comfortable, and which afforded a more secure and durable shelter; but I am anxious to know your opinion respecting the success of my attempts."

Vâmadevâ, after a moment's silence (no one being in a hurry to respond), rose slowly from the mat on which he had been seated, and majestically gathering together the folds of his long garment of undyed wool, replied:

"Thou hast acted as a free man, and no one among the chiefs of our families assembled here, has the right to blame thee if thou hast built a house for thyself and thy family exhibiting novel arrangements; but since

thou hast made an appeal to our views, I will give thee mine:—

“Formerly, when we inhabited our mountains, we lived in abodes less vast, less convenient, less sumptuous. Were we on that account less vigorous, less capable of subduing the Dasyus, less enduring of fatigue, less prepared to defend our families and our property? Certainly not. I like the new dwelling I have had built; but I liked, perhaps still better, the hut which I one day quitted with my waggons, to come and settle with you in this plain. These dwellings we are building, in ever-increasing size and beauty, are to me a source of fear as regards our children. I fear lest in the bosom of this luxurious existence they should forget the rude and simple life which the Arya ought to lead. If then I do not allow myself to blame what thou hast done in the fair exercise of thy liberty, I cannot refrain from casting a look of anxiety on the future, and asking myself whether this plenitude of comfort will not tend to corrupt those to whom we shall leave such beautiful habitations—we who in our youth lived under the scanty shelter of bark roofs; but who, habituated to fatigue and to struggle with the inclemency of the weather, found ourselves strong and resolute enough to render ourselves masters of this vast country, and of the miserable race that occupied it.” A murmur of approval from one quarter of the assembly greeted this discourse. Vâmadevâ continued:

“But there is a still greater peril; the protection which the powers that direct nature accord to the Arya is at stake. In the bosom of this abundant wealth—this life which is becoming more and more effeminate, since we have no longer to sustain an incessant struggle—what we must especially fear is lest we should forget the homage we are accustomed to render to those divine powers. I

readily believe that no one among us neglects the sacrifices which secure their favour ; but who can assure us that our children, brought up in luxury, will be always thus scrupulous,—that they will rise before daybreak to offer the sacrifice to Agni, and that our daughters will always go to gather the *somā* when the moon shines in the starry heaven ?” A sort of shudder then ran through the assembly, and a murmur of voices was heard for a long time before Vâmadevâ could resume his discourse.

“We must therefore take counsel,” said he at length when silence was restored ; “we cannot endure the thought that the most precious inheritance left us by our ancestors should be wasted, that the sanctity of our worship transmitted by the gods themselves to the fathers of our race should be corrupted.”

“No, no,” was heard from every part of the assembly.

“Well, then, let us appoint guardians of this sacred ritual ; and let us choose for this purpose the worthiest and most respected among us. Having done this we have nothing more to fear ; for these guardians, invested by us with sacred functions, and beloved by the gods of whose worship they will be the conservators, will become our counsellors when a proposition is made to innovate or modify anything in our customs, habits, and daily life. Thus, always guided by their intelligence, and blessed by the favour of the divine powers, the race of the Aryas will maintain itself in its original purity, and will continue to be the most powerful on the face of the earth.” The termination of this discourse was received with acclamations, and before the meeting separated, six chiefs of families were unanimously invested with sacerdotal functions.

On leaving the assembly, Doxius, who was habitually

gloomy, was radiant. Epergos, with a gesture habitual to him, was whistling on his thumb-nail.

"You seem to be very happy," said he to his companion when they were alone.

"Tolerably so," replied Doxius, "and I begin to think we shall make something of these men. It is thy extravagant house that has occasioned me this satisfaction, and I will take good care not to blame thee for having had it built according to thy fancy."

"Be it so ; but thou wilt not hinder the world from advancing, nor me from going on with what thou callest my follies. These good people are going to sleep well satisfied ; but they are preparing for themselves a work of no small difficulty, and that for many a long year."

"Because . . . ?"

"Oh ! I know very well what I mean, and that is enough for me ; the evil or the good—whichever thou mayst choose to call it—is already done ; retrogression is impossible. If those elders, commissioned to preserve the pure doctrines, transmit them intact to their successors, all will be well ; but if they themselves fall into error—what then ?"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DESERT OF CENTRAL ASIA.

THE plain extends as far as the eye can reach. In some quarters lines of calcareous rocks traverse the sandy soil like furrows. A few lichens form yellow spots on the grey stone. Sometimes also a shallow lake presents itself, on whose banks grow reeds which are soon dried up by the sun and wind. Occasionally peaty marshes are observed, in which the steps of wanderers form so many holes which become filled with brackish water. Not a tree, not a bush. The sky, of a greyish blue, mingles with the hazy horizon. The air is calm and heavy; though at intervals a whirling gust supervenes, and raises columns of dust which appear to advance slowly.

The silence is interrupted only by the croakings of batrachians and the hum of insects near the lakes. Long faults, like so many cracks in the terrestrial crust, form the only interruption to the monotony of these plains. At the foot of those escarpments, which are scarcely visible at a distance, where there is shelter from the winds, are grasses, reddish mosses, and a few slender thorny shrubs.

Epergos and Doxius, both mounted on small black horses, with rough coats and short broad heads, are travelling at a walking pace along one of those faults which seems to stretch as far as the horizon, oppressed by the heat and surrounded by a crowd of flies.

"What does thou hope to find in this desert ; what art thou come to look for here?" said Doxius after a long silence.

"Men," replied Epergos.

"Men here ! and how could they live here?"

"Wherever frogs and flies live, man can live. As for flies, there is no want of them, as thou seest ; and as for frogs, have we not heard abundance of them since the day began?" And after another interval of silence, as the sun was beginning to sink : "Look," said Epergos, "there, before us,—that thin column of bluish smoke rising straight towards the sky, is a fire, and certainly neither the flies nor the frogs have lighted it."

"Thou art dreaming ; it is the wind raising a column of dust as it has done throughout the day."

"No ; at this hour the wind no longer produces this phenomenon in these plains ; it is either quite at rest or follows one direction. That is smoke produced by green wood or dry grass ; let us go forward !"

Their horses began to trot through the points of rocks that jutted out of the sand, and the companions soon found themselves in the middle of a flock of sheep. At some distance they observed men, horses, and what seemed a line of brown hillocks scarcely raised above the ground, which at this spot was covered with grass.

As soon as they were within hearing, one of the men cried out to them not to advance further ; and dogs began to bark furiously. The man sprang upon a horse that was feeding near him, and arming himself with a long lance he advanced at a walking pace towards Epergos and Doxius. He was of medium height, dressed in a short coarse tunic with a kind of pelisse of black sheepskins, from which hung a hood. His legs and arms were bare, and his feet covered with sandals of skin fastened by

thongs; his face, whose native hue was yellow and which was also tanned by the sun, was anything but handsome. Under his black and closely approaching eyebrows, below a projecting and wide forehead, glittered two little loop-like eyes with black pupils, and which never looked straight before them. The thick short nose, the strongly projecting cheek-bones, the wide mouth surrounded by a scanty beard of a dull black colour, and a copper-coloured oily skin, imparted to these features a repulsive aspect.

"What do you want?" said the man; "to what tribe do you belong?"

"To none," replied Epergos; "we are strangers to these deserts and have lost our way; we ask of thee hospitality for this night."

"Approach then, and get down from your horses."

Epergos and Doxius were not slow in obeying this order given in a harsh tone.

"What are you carrying on your horses?" continued the man.

"Provisions, nothing more."

"Nothing from the east?"

"Nothing from the east."

"You come from thence nevertheless?"

"Yes."

"I can see that by your faces."

"Thou art acquainted then with the men of those regions."

"Many of them have passed along this way."

"Did they do you good or harm?"

"Harm; they robbed our flocks."

"Thou dost not like them, therefore."

"No."

"Dost thou wish to take vengeance upon us?"

"No; there are only two of you: we are more numerous

than you ; you have no weapons and we have ; we do not fear you. If you had anything with you that we should like, we should take it. But what good would it be to take your lives ? That would not restore to us the flocks stolen by your countrymen."

"That is plain speaking, and perhaps we shall be able to do you some good. Where do you live?"

"There," said the man, pointing to the elevations which at a distance they had taken for mounds. They drew near, and perceived that these habitations were made of skins sewn together, raised above the ground by an in-



Tent of the Mongolian Tartar.—FIG. 23.

genious combination of stakes, and fixed by pegs all round (fig. 23).

"You live in there," said Epergos.

"The women and children stay there ; we only go in to sleep."

Epergos entered one of the tents by creeping; but the fetid odour of the interior soon drove him out again.

Meanwhile the companions took some provisions from a bag suspended at their saddles, and sitting down on the grass, proceeded to take their evening's repast. Their host gave them some ewe's milk, and all the inhabitants of the encampment came to see the strangers, without manifesting any other sentiment than indifference. Some of the women seemed to have more curiosity, and walked round Epergos and Doxius, talking to each other, looking at their clothes, and venturing to touch them.

After sunset, the man who had accompanied them to the middle of the encampment, pointing out to them a small tent, said to them: "Here is a shelter for the night, this tent is empty; he who used to live in it will not return to it." Then turning round he went to seek his own lodging. Epergos and Doxius entered the place of shelter that had been indicated, but they remained only for a few moments, on account of its intolerable odour. They thought of passing the night in the open air, wrapped in large cloaks which they carried on their horses. Towards midnight, however, the cold became so piercing that they were obliged to take shelter under the tent that had been assigned them. Sleep overpowered them after the fatigues of the day; and when they awoke the sun was already high. On coming out of their sleeping-place, tents, men, horses and herds had all disappeared, and as far as the eye could reach there was nothing to be seen but the hazy and level horizon, with not a sign of life. The nomads had taken with them the horses of the two companions, deeming them tolerably worth having, and before dawn had decamped in silence.



CHAPTER IX.

THE DELTA OF THE NILE.

GREAT salt lakes communicating with the sea stretch along a vast shore of two hundred miles in breadth, and follow the arc of a circle presenting its convexity towards the north. Into these lakes, and along the shore itself, debouch several arms of a large river with muddy waters. Advancing into the regions south of these salt lakes, we find fresh water marshes and a blackish soil teeming with wading birds, flocks of wild geese and ducks, and covered with reeds and a rich vegetation. Crocodiles swarm in the fresh water lakes and the arms of the slowly flowing river, hippopotamuses bathe, and otters and batrachians swim.

This district is bordered east and west by two chains of hills of slight elevation, which tend to approach each other as we get further from the sea, and cause the valley through which the river flows to become narrower. These hills are bare and destitute of vegetation ; and beyond them we find nothing but sand and pebbles. It very seldom rains on the sea coast, and further inland not a drop is ever seen.

The atmosphere is always pure, dry, and light, and is favourable to health. At the summer solstice the waters of the river begin to swell, and their level rises gradually until the autumnal equinox, when the whole Delta is overflowed. Then the waters slowly decrease and the river

returns to its bed. The mud which it thus annually brings down causes a gradual elevation of the soil, encroaches on the sea, and fills up the smaller pools. Vegetation immediately takes possession of these deposits, and clouds of insects rise in the air as the waters subside. This country is occupied by men of mild manners, delicate features, and fine and slender limbs. Their skin is white with a slight bistre tint. Their eyes and hair are ebony black. These men say that their fathers came from the north-east into this country, which was then only a lagoon, after having passed through certain deserts. They live in villages, the houses of which are built of mud and reeds, and obey a body of elders, who in hereditary succession regulate all daily usages, and preside over all the acts of life and religious ceremonies.

These elders, entrusted with the administration and regulation of all things, do not cultivate the ground, gather in the fruits of the earth, or carry on any trade; entirely devoted to their religious and civil duties, they are supported by the population, over which they exercise absolute power.

The latter, though reduced to a condition bordering on serfdom,—their wants being easily satisfied in this beautiful climate, since they find in the natural produce of the soil enough for food and clothing,—do not complain of this condition, and make no effort to alter it.

They bid strangers welcome, without, however, permitting them to mingle in the transactions of daily life. They would deem themselves defiled by contact with them; they neither eat nor drink with them, nor allow them to enter the places which they consider sacred, or to speak to their women.

The inhabitants of the lowlands have only one wife; those of the higher valleys are allowed to have several.

On the river and the lakes they have boats made of planks, and of a woody plant that grows in the marshes, and which they call byblos. They make use of them for fishing and for commerce, for they are by disposition a trading people. Their arms consist of bows made of the skin of the hippopotamus, slings, and a kind of pikes. They employ copper and gold, and have the art of making pottery and glassware, which they skilfully colour in various patterns. In the higher part of the river live a black race, against whom they are obliged sometimes to defend their southern frontier, which is about six hundred miles from the sea. On the west and east they have no cause for apprehension, since these regions are desert. They have a great respect for the dead, whose bodies they preserve with salt to prevent them from decaying. This respect is extended to some of the lower animals, which they consider sacred, and to which they render funeral honours.

Their houses, separated from each other and surrounded each by a breadth of cultivated ground, are built on the shores of the river or the lakes, as far as possible out of the reach of the inundations; for as they are built partly of clay, when they have been immersed in water for some days, they are reduced to mere mud, and fall in.

The wealthiest inhabitants, therefore, take care to erect their dwellings on platforms, or to mingle reeds with the clay in such a manner as to enable the latter to resist the action of the water.

The inhabitants of that part of the river above the Delta, who live in a narrow valley bounded by chains of hills of limestone or sandstone, and destitute of fertile marshes filled with those useful reeds, which serve also for food—dwell in grottos, formed by nature, or hollowed out in the sides of the hills.

These men subsist by fishing and the chase, and on spelt, which is cultivated along the banks of the river.

Bolder and more robust than the inhabitants of the lowlands, it is they who struggle against the black race when the latter attempt to descend the course of the river. They seem, however, to be of the same origin as their neighbours of the Delta, though they are taller and darker in complexion, more enterprising, active, and independent.

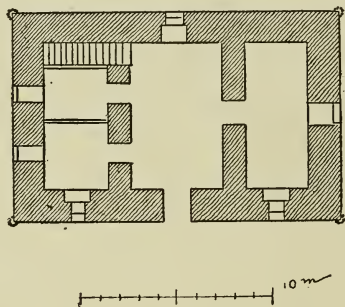
We will describe how the inhabitants of the Delta build their houses, which are by no means capacious; for they live habitually in the open air, and scarcely remain in their dwellings except to sleep.

Many even take their meals out of doors under shelters made of mats, which screen them from the heat of the sun, and which are set up either at the side of the houses or at the top of them; for as the rain is very rare in this country the houses have no roofs, but are covered by terraces. The inhabitants of this region are very fond of animals; they have always some with them; and they take their meals surrounded by domesticated dogs, cats, and birds. They exclude from their presence only those animals which they consider unclean,—pigs, for example; though they make use of them and eat their flesh. But if a man touches a pig, he has to purify himself by plunging into water with his clothes on. Those who tend these animals live apart, are not admitted into the company of other men, and may not enter the sacred enclosures.

When, therefore, an inhabitant of the Delta has selected the site he judges suitable for erecting his dwelling, he has the ground plan marked out by those who are entrusted with building operations, and who form a corporate body. Then they lay in a store of bundles of canes and reeds called byblos and lotus, and form a heap

of clay, which they temper with water and mix with spelt straw; and of this they form bricks that are quickly dried in the sun.

Houses of the common sort consist of a principal apartment, about eight cubits wide (fig. 24)¹ by fourteen long; a second narrower room six cubits wide, the length being



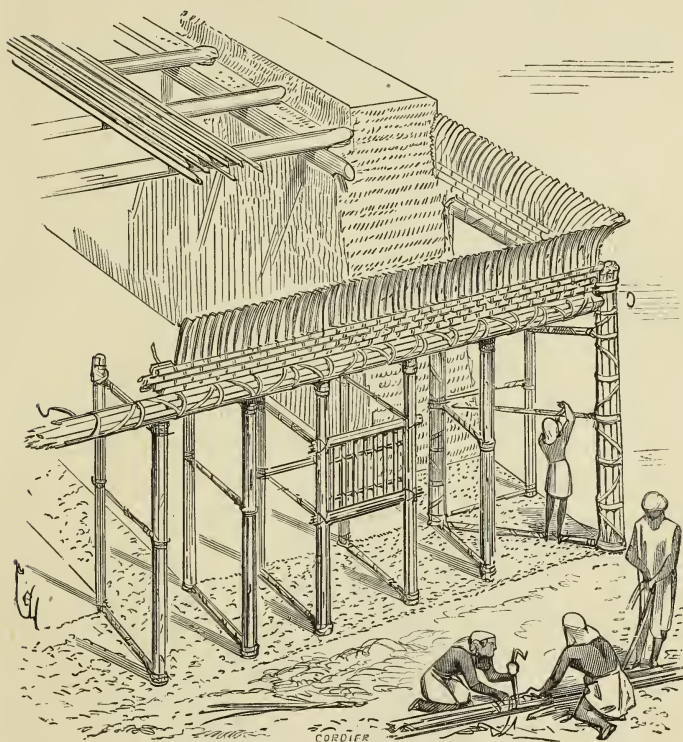
Plan of Primitive Egyptian House.—FIG. 24.

the same; and two small apartments serving for bed-chambers, six cubits wide and as many long, separated by a partition less in height than the apartment. A wooden stair on the inside gives access to the terrace. The walls are thick, and this is how they are built:—

When the plan has been marked out, as shown in figure 24, they prepare bundles of canes and lotus. These reeds are carefully fastened together by bonds of byblos, and thus form a kind of posts whose length corresponds with the height intended to be given to the building, which is scarcely greater than from seven to eight cubits from the ground to the upper terrace. First, they fix the strongest bundles at the four external angles of the house (fig. 25). Other bundles are fixed at the internal angles, so as to be vertical. These external and internal bundles are fastened together by ties of byblos. The four angles being thus prepared, set up and kept in place

¹ The Egyptian cubit is 20·6422153 in.

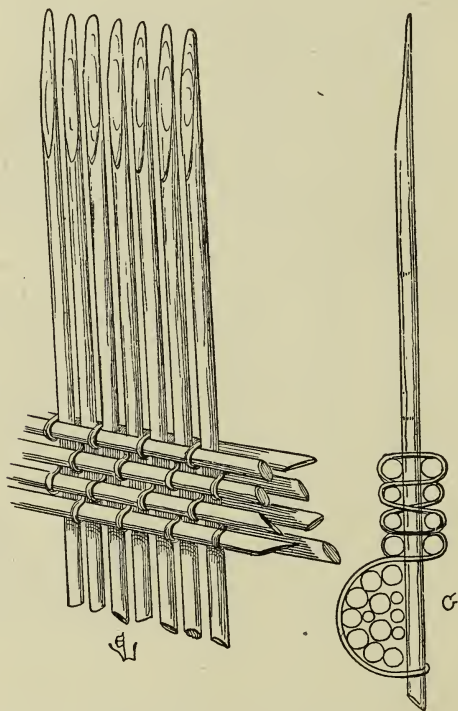
by stays, bundles of canes are laid horizontally, so as to bind together the heads of the external posts at the four



Building of Primitive Egyptian House.—FIG. 25.

sides; and these horizontal bundles are relieved in their bearing by intermediate vertical reeds, between which are contrived the openings that will form the doors and windows. These external vertical reeds are tied to other internal posts made of reeds. Then the labourers engaged in tempering the clay set to work, building the reeds in the walls, except the external vertical ones at the angles and the horizontal crowning, which, thus serve as setting-out stakes and guides for raising the walls.

When these have reached the level C, they place on the large horizontal bundle a sort of trellis-work of reeds prepared beforehand, as shown in figure 26, and which is composed of a double row of reeds, between which other reeds placed very close are kept in a perpendicular position



Structure with Reeds.—FIG. 26.

by means of plaited bonds of byblos. This trellis-work is kept vertical by other bonds which fasten the lower parts of the stalks of the reeds that form the trellis-work to the inside of the large horizontal roll above, as at G. Then the clay-workers continue their work behind this trellis, and ramming their clay they give

a bend outwards to the ends of the reeds, so as to form a slightly projecting cornice. These reeds keep the clay thus rammed projecting, and allow the curve to be terminated by a flat fillet which gives the level of the terrace. The workmen, who are patient and careful, execute these works very neatly, raising the clay on inclined planes. When the inner and outer walls are thus raised to their intended height, they place trunks of palm-trees, cypress, or sycamore on the top of the walls, according to the width of the rooms ; then on these trunks, reed ; then clay gently rammed so as to form the upper platform plastered with the same clay, kneaded with straw ; and the heavier part of the work is thus completed. For the jambs and lintels of the doors and windows, they make use of reeds in the humbler dwellings, and palm-trunks in those of more pretension.

As the sunlight in this country is extremely brilliant, the windows are very small, and are furnished with lattice-work skilfully interlaced. If the habitations belong to persons of property, the walls are plastered with clay, like the terraces, and covered with a composition formed of the same clay and very fine sand or white stone-dust. Then come the painters who decorate the reeds and plastering with brilliant colours ; the walls and ceilings of the interior are similarly treated ; rush mats furnish the floor and cover the lower part of the walls. Sometimes also we find a portico supported on bundles of reeds, and whose covering is made of wood and byblos, with a terrace of clay before the door, affording shade and coolness in front of the dwelling. This portico is the usual resort, and under it industrial occupations are carried on. To the women are assigned outdoor occupations ; it is they who go to fetch the provisions, do the marketing, and carry burdens, while the men remain near the houses, weave, manufacture

mats, pottery, and small works in wood, in which they are very expert.

Figure 27 presents one of these habitations selected from among the higher class.

In the evening, at the time when the sun is disappearing below the horizon, the various families ascend the terraces



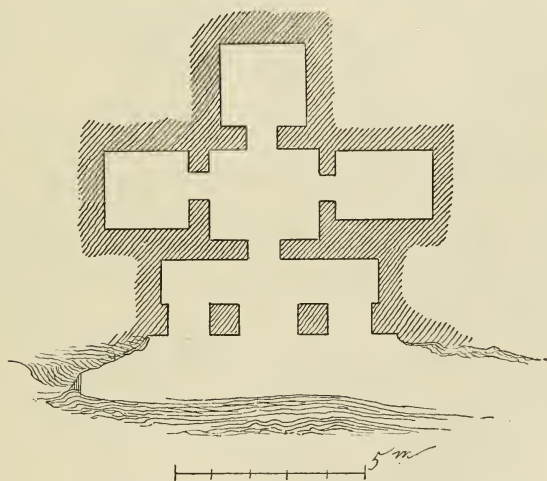
Early Egyptian House.—FIG. 27.

to enjoy the coolness. The air being usually very calm, many light small earthen lamps filled with oil; and as these dwellings are generally surrounded with trees, these lights may be seen burning in the midst of the verdure,

going, coming, and disappearing like glow-worms in the meadows.

The dwellings of those who live above the Delta differ in every respect from those we have just described. On the sides of the rocky hills which border the banks of the river, there are natural grottos in which these men originally took up their abode. But when the population increased it was necessary to hollow out excavations in default of natural caves.

This laborious, patient, and industrious race had the art of fabricating tools fit for this work; namely, hatchets and chisels of bronze, and even sledge-hammers made of very hard stones which are found higher up the river, at the place where it passes through rocks which obstruct its course. Certain parts of these hills, moreover,



Plan of Dwelling excavated in the Rock.—FIG. 28.

present limestone in large masses, which can be pretty readily cut.

Whether it was that they preserved traditions of con-

structions in wood before their sojourn in these regions, or whether it arose from the example of the habitations of the more populous lowlands, certain it is that when the natives of the higher valley hollow out dwellings, they sometimes reproduce forms which remind one of wooden structures.

These dwellings,—we speak of the more recent—those hollowed out by human hands,—generally present, in plan, the arrangement shown in fig. 28.

Taking advantage of a natural ledge on the sides



View of the Rock Dwelling.—FIG. 29.

of the hill, they hollowed out a kind of porch with one or two pillars left in the solid. At the back of the

porch a doorway is pierced giving entrance to several small chambers excavated at right angles to each other.

The entrances to these habitations present an exterior such as is here depicted (fig. 29), appearing at a distance suspended along the escarpments. When the inhabitants catch fish, they dry it in the sun, whose heat is very great, and thus preserve it for a considerable time. When required, they add salt, which they collect on the shores of the marshes that border the sea below the Delta. These dwellings dug in the sandstone or limestone, are very dry, as the hills contain no springs and the sky is always clear. Thus their inhabitants are robust, healthy, and active. They are skilful in managing their boats; and many of them pass their lives on the river, transporting to the Delta certain tools and arms fabricated by them, as well as products of the chase and fisheries, stone, gold, and metals which they get from the black race who are their neighbours, and perfumes extracted from certain plants. They bring back salt, stuffs, wood, pottery and many useful articles manufactured on the shores of the lower river. They are warlike, and carry on a continual conflict with the black tribes that inhabit the upper part of the valley, sometimes extending their own territory, and sometimes forced to yield parts of it.

Although subjected to the same *régime* as the inhabitants of the Delta,—that is to say, obeying sacerdotal authorities to whom the administration of all affairs is entrusted, these men of the middle valley are more independent, more energetic, and less submissive than their neighbours of the lower river to the theocratic government, which is divided among a multitude of petty despots.

One day, the bravest and noblest of them assembled in great numbers and chose for themselves a chief supreme—a king—in whose person the power hitherto

dispensed was concentrated. This king bore the name of Menes, and soon all Egypt obeyed him.

"Thou wert accustomed," said Doxius to his companion, "to consider the men we visited in the mountains of the Upper Indus as the race *par excellence*; and during our stay among them we saw them often change their opinions and plans. Changeable and fickle in their purposes, and incapable of stability, they listened to thy counsels, and the Creator only knows where those will lead them. These inhabitants of the valley of the Nile appear to me much wiser, and seem to deserve the title of men *par excellence*. They are capable of submitting to a fixed law, and no one among them thinks of endeavouring to evade it. This is much more commendable. Fearing lest the law should be compromised by the negligence or folly of some of its interpreters, they will henceforth recognise only one!"

"Indeed!" replied Epergos; "but what if this sole interpreter lost his wits?"

"They would replace him by another, since they are unanimous in wishing to maintain everything *in statu quo*. Go into the house of one of the families of this admirable people, and thou wilt see that the articles in daily use are exactly similar to those which they have carefully preserved as having belonged to their ancestors. They build their houses in the same manner, and with the same materials; and they take good care to hinder proud men from employing other methods. This is a wise and good policy; it is, in fact, the only true one. We must remain in this country, especially as it is a desirable one to live in."

"Oh! we have not seen all countries; there may perhaps be a better one elsewhere."

"These good people have given themselves a king who will maintain everything in its original condition, thou

sayest. Very well. But he and his successors will perhaps take it into their heads to make all this population work for them. Not contented with houses made of clay and reeds which time will destroy, these kings may probably wish to inhabit dwellings that shall be indestructible."

"Since these kings are invested with their office for the very purpose of preserving things as they were, they will not change this custom."

"For the very reason that they are placed here to preserve, they will insist upon it that their own dwellings shall not perish."

"Thou seest that everything here is subjected to severe regulations. The arrangement and appearance of the dwellings are settled."

"Exactly; they will not change either the arrangements or the appearance; but for the monarch and his friends they may perhaps erect in stone—that is, with great labour and expense—buildings of the same appearance as those so easily raised with a little mud and a few reeds. Thou wilt be abundantly gratified, Doxius, for thou wilt walk for ages among habitations similar in appearance to those we see now. But the poor wretches who will have passed their lives in laboriously raising these dwellings exactly like the former ones, and in shaping the hard materials which will form them—say, will they also be gratified? I doubt it."

"These are only suppositions; and there are no serious reasons why these kings should insist on having dwellings of stone in place of those constructed of mud and reeds which are very good, and suffice for the wants of all; unless, prompted by thy penchant for changing everything, thou shouldst put this notion into their minds."

"I shall take care to do nothing of the kind! but

observe that the king who has just been elected, and those who first thought of putting him at the head of the whole population of the valley of the Nile, used to inhabit dwellings hollowed out in stone; and we may well believe that they will prefer not to alter their customs, but that—finding no grottoes in the Delta, and not being able to excavate any, since there are no hills here fit for the purpose—they will have materials brought here for building habitations of stone, and cease to have them made of mud. They will begin to wish to honour the divinity by raising indestructible temples to him; and the people, who are strongly attached to all that concerns religion, will hasten to erect buildings in accordance with the suggestions of their masters; and in the next place, the masters themselves will wish to approach the divinity as nearly as possible—to put themselves in communication with him; and they in their turn will want palaces as durable as the temples. And who will build these palaces? The people, if I am not mistaken; but will they be any happier in their mud dwellings on that account?”



CHAPTER X.

THE DWELLINGS OF THE EGYPTIANS UNDER THE FIRST THREE DYNASTIES.

EPERGOS was not far wrong ; nevertheless, the modifications introduced into the constructive system of the habitations on the shores of the Lower Nile were gradual and indeterminate, for no one dared to innovate in matters of any kind.

During the reign of the early monarchs, this favoured valley became a centre of agricultural and industrial production, which was already attracting many foreigners. Its commerce was flourishing, and wealth was accumulating in the hands of its fortunate inhabitants. The kings had gradually surrounded themselves with a numerous court, consisting in great part of functionaries, on whom devolved the duty of administering the government of the country. The life of all the citizens was regulated by laws ; the monarch found his chief occupation in a rigorous scrutiny of everything. The configuration of the country was admirably adapted to this paternal form of government. The Nile, whose valley is of inconsiderable width above the Delta, was the natural artery which facilitated travelling, the transport of goods, and surveillance over the whole country. In fact, at a hundred and eighty miles to the south—reckoning from the sea—the valley narrows more and more for about seven hundred miles, where the country inhabited by the blacks commences. There it becomes very narrow, and the course of the river

is impeded by rocks. It is at the point where the ranges of calcareous hills approach each other, at the upper extremity of the Delta, that the first kings established their residence. Thus the Delta and all the upper course of the river was readily subjected to their surveillance; for from this point, beyond the hills on either shore, the country is absolutely a desert; while the river presents, as it were, a wide highway of water always navigable, whose shores, favourable for cultivation, and consequently habitable, are of inconsiderable extent. These shores were soon covered with villages; for the inhabitants of the narrow part of the valley left their caverns to live near the river. Unwrought stone and mud served for the construction of their dwellings. But a day came when a violent earthquake alarmed the inhabitants, and threw down many of these houses. Those of which the walls were thick resisted pretty well, but most of those whose walls were thin, were destroyed or greatly shattered. The phenomenon hardly made itself felt in the Delta itself, but produced terrible effects in the upper part of the valley.

The Egyptians, having a great respect for the dead, and believing in the immortality of the souls of all animated beings, buried their relations—having secured their remains against corruption by special processes—in natural or excavated caverns; concealing their bodies under piles of stones and unburnt bricks, as a further protection to prevent their place of sepulture from being violated.

They gave to such piles the name of *Pi-rama*, which means height; or *Pi-re-mi*, according to others,—meaning *Splendour of the Sun*.

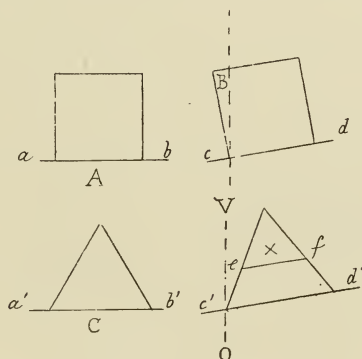
These piles are raised on a quadrangular base, as are all Egyptian buildings, and rise to a greater or less elevation according to the area of this base and the inclination of the faces. Now, after the earthquake just mentioned,

the ablest of the Egyptian savants having ascertained that these pyramids, even when hollow and with walls comparatively thin, had not suffered any derangement, met to discuss the question whether it would not be advantageous to give future habitations the form of these erections.

Epergos and Doxius were consulted.

Doxius contented himself with saying that if the solid earth was shaken, man had not the power of avoiding the effects of this phenomenon, and ought to resign himself to its consequences,—entreating the gods, however, to render them less terrible. Epergos having observed that the Egyptians possessed a considerable acquaintance with geometry, took a bit of charcoal and drew on the wall the figure 30, below ; then he said—

“If the solid A is placed on the level ground ab , it

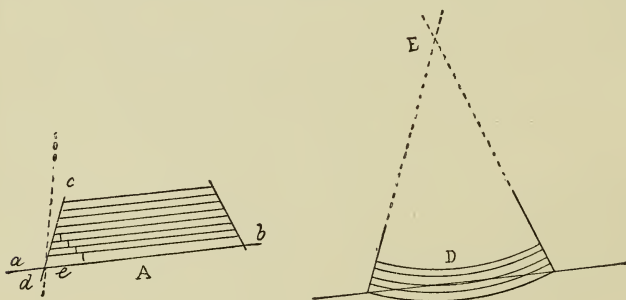


The Cube and the Pyramid.—FIG. 30.

will keep upright by its own mass, but if the ground inclines, as cd , all the part B of the solid must break off and fall. If, on the other hand, the solid C is placed on a level ground $a'b'$, and if this ground inclines as $c'd'$, no part of this solid can break away, since the whole of it remains within the vertical line VO ; this is why your pyramids stood while your houses fell.

"But these earthquakes, as I have had the opportunity of ascertaining elsewhere, shake the ground rather than disturb its level, or at least, this disturbance of level is scarcely felt; you need, therefore, only give your houses a slight inclination to keep them standing, in the event of an oscillation of the ground. But it is not necessary to terminate them in a point like your pyramids; for, suppose the part x of the pyramids taken away, the part c', d', e, f , which will remain, will not be less stable."

The assembly listened attentively to Epergos. When he had concluded, an old man who was reputed to be one of the most intelligent of their savants, and who was accustomed to observe the stars in order to ascertain the periods favourable to the various agricultural operations, arose, and slowly advancing to the wall on which



Pyramid with Inverted Curve Base.—FIG. 31.

Epergos had drawn the diagrams given above, took the piece of charcoal in his turn, drew the figure 31, and said—

"Thy reasoning is good, Epergos, but neither the houses nor our pyramids are made in one piece; both consist of materials whose cohesion is limited. If therefore, the house A inclines in the direction of the line ab , in consequence of a movement of the ground, though the line dc does not go beyond the vertical, the materials e may slip

under pressure, and thus the whole building be dislocated. But if we lay the courses of brick or stone according to the sketch D, taking E as the centre of the segments of the circle,—the point, viz., towards which the two slanting lines which form the faces of the walls converge,—the corner-stones will scarcely be affected by the pressure, and will not be able to slip, since they will not be on an inclined plane.”

Epergos lowered his hands to the level of his knees in token of respectful acquiescence, and bowed his head; and the old man returned to his place amidst a hum of approval. It was resolved that in ten days the assembly should meet again, and bring together such results of reflection on the subject as might occur to its members, and that they should thus formulate the decree to be submitted to the royal sanction.

Accordingly, at the end of ten days, the members of the assembly having met, declared that they had nothing to add to what had been previously said. Epergos was the only one who made a fresh suggestion, which was to the effect that if, instead of adopting quadrangular bases, they constructed their dwellings on a circular plan, inclining the beds of the courses inwards, the stability would be perfect, and there would not be a weak point anywhere round the building. This proposal was received with a loud expression of dissent, and one of the most respected members of the assembly, rising, said: “The dwelling of man should face the four points of the heavens; that is a sacred custom. It is becoming that such a structure should have a front and sides, which a circular building cannot possess. It should have its corners, and these corners ought to be square. Epergos spoke without due consideration.”

“Certainly!” answered the assembly with one voice.

The royal decree promulgated at the recommendation

of the assembly, was to the following effect: that the walls of dwellings to be erected should be inclined according to an angle prescribed by the inspectors of buildings; that, if the houses were raised on stone basements, the courses must be laid in the direction of the part of a circle given by a radius equal to one of the sides of the triangle, whose apex should be the intersection of the slanting lines of the walls; that the same plan should be adopted for buildings made of unburnt bricks; that, moreover, the ancient and hallowed form of these houses, whether in plan or elevation, should not be altered in any way.

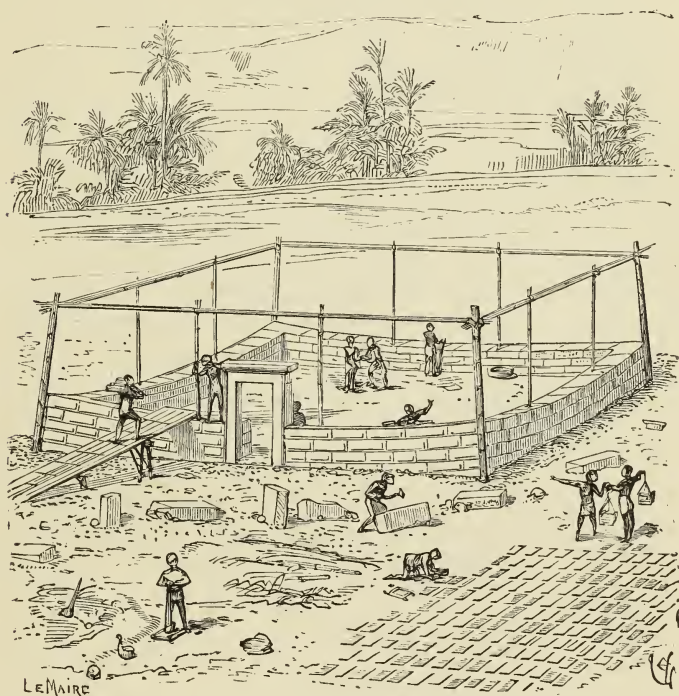
The first houses, therefore, that were erected after this decree, exhibited basements built as shown in figure 32; and guide-rods of canes were always employed to direct the masons.

The workmen, however, who were accustomed to build with unbaked brick, pise and canes, were not very skilful in working stone; they had as yet only bronze tools, which were quickly blunted, although they tempered them. For splitting the stones in the quarry, having observed that limestone naturally exists in beds, they laid bare the horizontal surface; then with bronze punches they sank a series of narrow oblong holes in a line—according to the required size of the block to be quarried—to the depth of four or five inches. That done, they drove into these holes very dry wooden wedges; they evenly wetted these wedges, which, swelling, split the stone according to the line traced by the sinkings.

Then with the help of wooden levers hardened by fire, they got the block out of its place. In consequence of the bedded nature of the stone, these blocks thus took the form of parallelopipeds, whose faces they rendered even, and which they combined.

Being a patient, laborious people, they ultimately suc-

ceeded in giving all these blocks a regular shape, and even in polishing them with hard stones, and in graving lines and characters upon them; for in consonance with the principle adopted on the banks of the Nile of having every particular of daily life formally determined, it is ruled that every building, indeed every object, should



Building the House with Inverted Curve Base.—FIG. 32.

commemorate the reasons why such buildings or objects were set up, and the names of those for whom they were set up; so that nothing is given over to oblivion. He, therefore, who is acquainted with the characters by means of which they represent facts, dates, and the names of

things on stone, wood, pottery or metal, can learn all that concerns the past and the present of this people.

Such were the arrangements sanctioned by the kings of the first three dynasties, which lasted for seven hundred and sixty-nine years, and as during that time the inhabitants of the valley of the Nile never ceased working, and improving everything, they attained to a very high degree of development in the arts, in sciences, manufactures, and agriculture.

While the poorer class always built houses with clay and canes, those who had become rich, and who held offices in the state, were no longer content with abodes so simple and perishable. They began to use blocks of stone, unburnt bricks carefully plastered, and timbers squared and cut into boards. Nevertheless, the forms hallowed by primitive use had to be adhered to; and while changing the nature of the materials, the builders scrupulously preserved the appearance of the ancient dwellings.

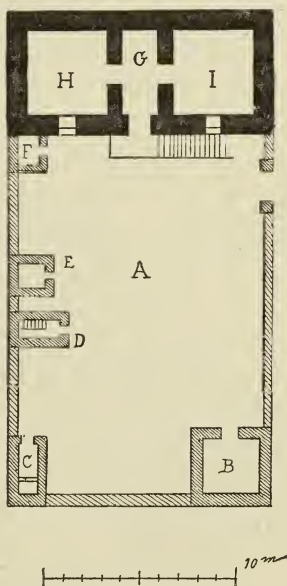
Porticos, however, were added; the rooms were more numerous, and the outbuildings more important.

In primitive times the inhabitants cooked their food in the open air; but they now began to provide places suitable for this purpose, invariably outside the dwelling,—especially as the family usually took their meals under the shelter of trees and awnings of stuff.

The domestic animals flocked about their owners during these meals; and there might be seen around the little tables on which the viands were laid, antelopes, cats, dogs, geese, and long-legged birds, living together on the best of terms, and diverting their masters by begging for food and by their familiarity. Each habitation was surrounded by a garden enclosed within walls of unburnt brick, and more or less extensive according to the means of the proprietor. These gardens were tended with extreme care, and con-

tained rare plants growing in boxes, to preserve them from the scorching heat of the sun or shelter them from the wind of the desert which, when it blew, speedily dried up the leaves and flowers. The gardens and dwellings, invariably placed on the banks of the river or of canals, had a contrivance for working a chain pump pouring water into channels which, subdividing, irrigated the plantations. These hydraulic machines were worked by slaves or by asses.

The simpler houses must first be noticed. Here is one of them, figure 33, consisting of a small garden A, with a pantry for provisions at B, latrines at C, dove-cots at D, fowl-house at E, and oven at F for cooking. The dwelling part comprises a room G, open to the court, and two chambers H and I with beds. A flight of stairs outside made of wood gives access to the terrace.



Plan of Egyptian Rural Dwelling.—FIG. 33.

Figure 34 presents a bird's eye view of this dwelling. Four poles, fixed in fastenings left in the wall, allow the placing of an awning over the central terrace, which is made lower, to afford shelter from the wind. It is there that the family love to assemble in the evening to enjoy the coolness.

We have said that the Egyptians were expert in the sciences of geometry and arithmetic. In fact, since the land in the valley which the Nile periodically waters and

irrigates was wonderfully fertile, and the population inhabiting this valley was very numerous, it had from the earliest times appeared a matter of importance not to leave any part of the ground uncultivated. The territory was therefore divided into allotments with the greatest care, in



View of Egyptian Rural Dwelling.—FIG. 34.

such a way that each inhabitant was the possessor of the quantity of land he could cultivate or have cultivated. Accordingly, the ancient priests, who governed before the kings, scrupulously preserved plans, drawn on papyrus leaves, of the heritage of each possessor, to

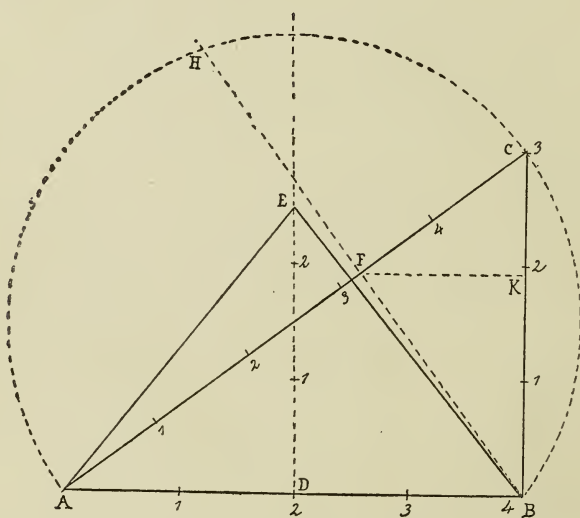
prevent litigation and encroachments. To draw these registered maps it was necessary to have recourse to geometrical operations, which necessity gradually improved; and it soon became evident that the triangle was the figure by which an extent of territory could be exactly mapped out, its dimensions ascertained, and its various features—such as water-courses, parts inundated or dry, sandy, rocky, or muddy—be duly indicated. The triangle was accordingly regarded as the sacred figure,—particularly the right-angled triangle, whose base divides into four, the side into three, and the hypotenuse into five equal parts; so that this figure had to be adopted by architects in the construction of the palaces and temples.

The equilateral triangle and the rectangle were likewise regarded as perfect figures, and on this account the assembly mentioned above judged it wrong to listen to the observations of Epergos. As to the religious ideas attached to these figures, they must not be spoken of. They are mysteries known only to the priests; suffice it to say, that that side of the right-angled triangle which divides into three represents Osiris, the base divided into four, Isis, and the hypotenuse, Orus,—composed of the two; since the square of three is 9, the square of four 16, and the square of five 25, *i.e.*, $9+16$. This triangle, therefore, being the perfect figure, if employed in the setting out of buildings, could not—they argued—but produce excellent results; it was consequently prescribed, as well as the equilateral triangle.

As regards the method to be adopted in applying the perfect triangle in buildings, this is how, after long consideration, the priests proceeded.

Let ABC (fig. 35) be the perfect triangle whose base contains 4, its side 3, and its hypotenuse 5 equal parts. On the centre of the base AB they erected the

perpendicular DE, giving it a length equal to half the hypotenuse ($2\frac{1}{2}$); they then joined the points AE, BE, and thus obtained a triangle which they regarded as the stable figure *par excellence*. Inscribing the triangle ABC in a circle, they drew from the point B a perpendicular BF on the hypotenuse which they produced to H on the circumference of the circle. Then from the point of intersection, F, they let fall a perpendicular upon the side CB;



The Egyptian Triangle.—FIG. 35.

next they divided each of the parts of the base into 12, thus making 48 subdivisions of this base. Each part of the perpendicular BC also divided into 12 parts gave 36. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ parts of the perpendicular DE divided (in the same proportion) gave 30. The hypotenuse gave 60. Now $60 = 5 \times 12$; $30 = 2 \times 12 + 6$ (half of 12); $36 = 3 \times 12$; $48 = 4 \times 12$. They thus obtained quantities divisible by 4, by 3, by 5, and by $2\frac{1}{2}$. Not satisfied with this first result,

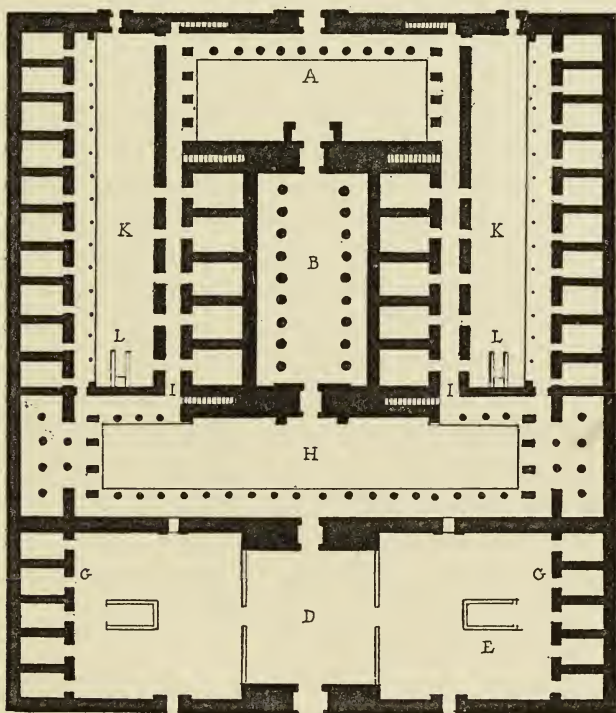
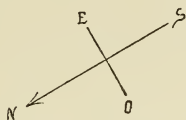
they divided each of the parts of the base into 100, and obtained 400 subdivisions. Similarly dividing the line DE, they obtained 250. The chord BH gave them 480 parts equal to the last; the part AF of the hypotenuse 320; the remainder FC 180; the perpendicular FK 144 or 12×12 . Thus the figure furnished decimal and duodecimal divisions. Now, in assigning proportions to buildings, the duodecimal system has the advantage of being divisible by halves, quarters, thirds, and sixths, and the decimal system by tenths. The combination of the two systems yielded serviceable relations. Thus the base AB divided by the duodecimal system into 48 parts is commensurate with the chord BH, divided by the decimal system into 480.

The builders therefore made use of this kind of standard of proportions in their constructions, it being left to their discretion also to employ the equilateral triangle, as we shall presently see.

Let us examine the palace of a nomarch, that is, a governor of a province in the reign of King Cerperes, who ascended the throne seven hundred and forty-four years after Menes; a palace of contemporary date with the small dwelling we were describing.

The programme laid down by this nomarch for the guidance of his architect was this:—Two entrances to the palace, one public, the other for its inhabitants. On the public entrance side, a court with porticos giving access to a vast hall open to the sky in the middle. On the private entrance side, a large fore-court with quarters for the domestics on either side;—with kitchen and tank. Then a second court with open porticos and halls at each end. Entrances to the chambers ranged on both sides of the great hall, but without direct communication with the latter. Two lateral courts with storehouses

parallel to AB. Taking AB as base, he drew the equilateral triangle ABI. He described a circle about this equilateral triangle. The tangent KL gave him the boundary of the outer court. The length of the hypo-



Plan of Egyptian Palace.—FIG. 37.

thenuse GH being 34 feet, that of the base GO was 27 feet, and of the side OH, 20 feet. On the perpendicular OH produced, the architect measured 5 times 20 feet

beyond the point H. From M to N he likewise measured off 20 feet. These lines, excepting those of the perimeter, gave him the centres of his walls. He was then able to mark in detail the plan (fig. 37). The public entrance with its court was at A; the great hall with its central opening to the sky, at B; the private entrance at C, with its fore-court D; the kitchen at E; the tank opposite, and the servants' quarters at G; the inner court with its porticos was at H, with the entrances to the rooms on the ground-floor by two passages at I. Those of the first floor were reached by two flights of stairs contrived within the *pylones*. At K the two courts for stores; at L were placed the latrines. At the two extremities of the court, H, were the halls open to this court for private gatherings.

Figure 38 gives a bird's-eye view of this sumptuous habitation. Beautiful, well-kept gardens bordered the dwelling, which was built on the banks of the Nile; its grounds being traversed by a canal for irrigation.

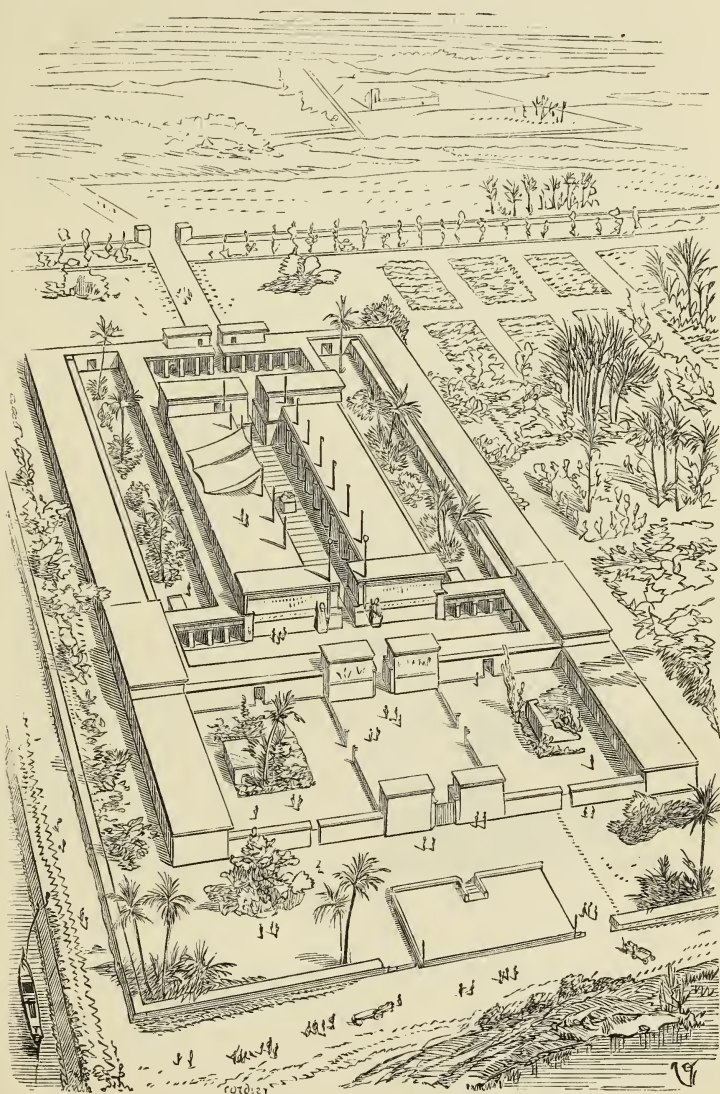
But it is desirable to examine more closely the method of setting out adopted by the architect.

We take the principal hall with its porticos and its chambers. The builder had subordinated the central lines of the building to the divisions given by the base and hypotenuse of the perfect triangle (fig. 36). If in this figure we consider only the triangle PRD, whose base occupies the half of the breadth between the central lines of the main block, we may divide this triangle PRD as we divided the great triangle ACD.

The base PR, then, would have a length of 68 feet, the side RD 51 feet, and the hypotenuse 85 feet.

Figure 39 shows how in plan these divisions of the base and hypotenuse have given all the central lines, whether parallel or perpendicular to this base. The part *ab* of the hypotenuse being 17 feet in length, the side *cb* will be 10.

feet. Taking 5 feet for the diameter of the columns, there



Bird's-Eye View of Egyptian Palace. FIG. 38.

will remain 5 feet between them above the base. The

walls will also be set out by means of these fractions, so that the wall A will be 6 feet 8 inches in thickness at the base; those marked B and C, each 5 feet; the walls D, 3 feet 4 inches, and the doorways E, the same.

In section (see x) having in the same way drawn the perfect triangle ORP, the apex of this triangle will give the height of the pylones; the point of division G, the height

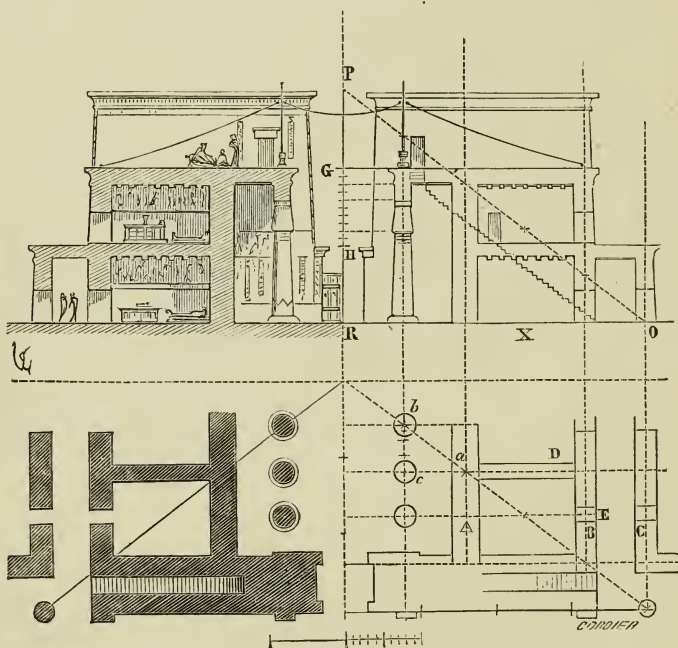
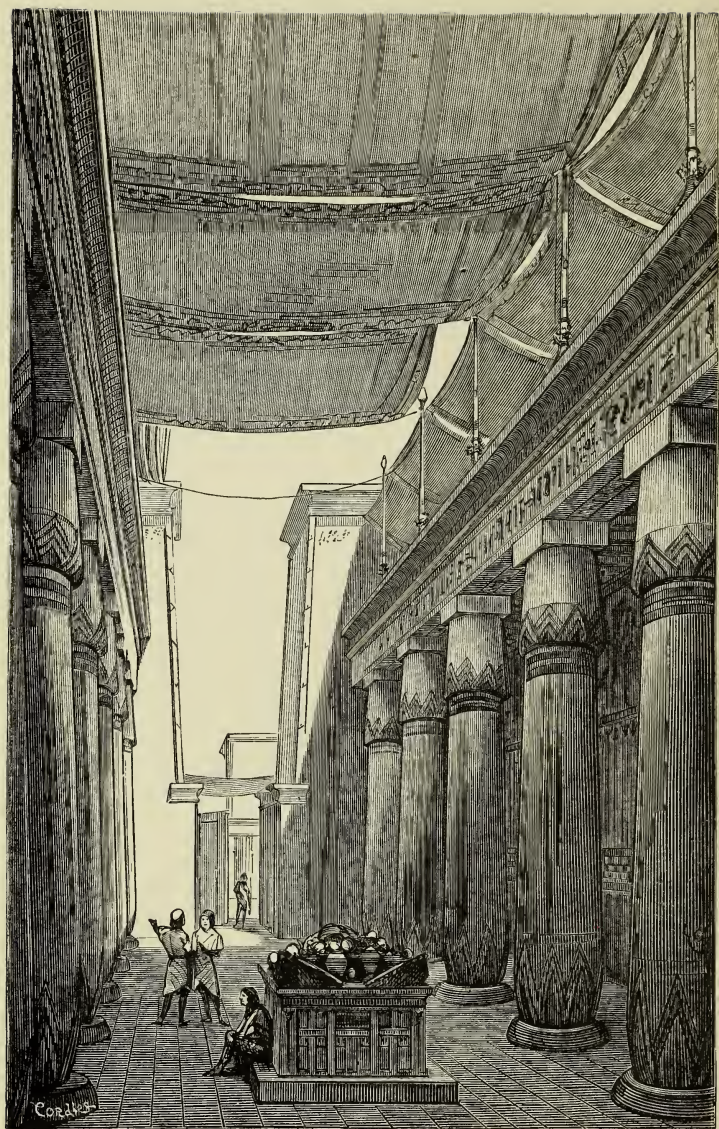


FIG. 39.

of the cornice of the wings; the point of division H, the height of the doorway. The cornice of the great interior portico will be 3 feet 4 inches in depth, the architrave 3 feet 4 inches, and the capital with its abacus, 6 feet 8 inches. Thus, then, this perfect triangle and its divisions will give the proportions of every part of the edifice.



INTERIOR OF EGYPTIAN PALACE.—FIG. 40.

[To face page 105.]

A story of apartments was obtained over those of the ground-floor, and the stairs contrived in the pylones ascended to these rooms and to the terrace, covered, when required, with awnings.

Epergos and Doxius had an opportunity of visiting the dwelling of the wealthy nomarch, and were admitted by the steward of his domains with the courtesy habitual to the higher classes of the Nile valley. This officer received them at the eastern entrance, which was reserved for the public, and began by showing them the fore-court* furnished with porticos on three sides.

At each end the terraces of this portico were supported by square pillars, while columns of a cylindrical form were ranged along the outer pylone which formed the centre of the enclosure.

In front of the great hall stood an enclosure upon which was stretched an azure veil, and which formed a sort of porch. Two other pylones having the interval between them closed by doors, formed the entrance to the great hall.

Epergos was never weary of admiring this interior flanked by two porticos, supported by lofty columns. All the central part, open to the sky, could be covered by awnings hung between poles fixed on the terrace. To these poles were fastened other awnings which formed two continuous tents on these two terraces, disposed with a view to the enjoyment of the evening coolness.

The stone columns and capitals, whose forms recalled that of the lotus bud, were covered with painting; they supported architraves of wood likewise painted in bright colours, and a cornice formed with canes as before described.

The ceilings of the two porticos supporting the terrace

* See Fig. 37, at A.

floor were in like manner made of wood painted. Through the opening left between the pylones, at either end of the hall, glowed the azure of the sky, while the interior was only illumined by the subdued and tinted light that streamed through the woven awnings of divers shades (fig. 40).

Midway in the central nave stood a credence on which offerings were laid. The silence which reigned in this place was interrupted only by the murmur of the breeze, which played among the awnings and caressed the angles of the pylones.

Though naturally indisposed to reverie, Epergos seated himself for a moment on the step which served as a base-ment to the credence and appeared buried in reflection, while Doxius was conversing with the steward of the nomarch.

"What a singular people!" said Epergos to himself. "Is it greatness or weakness of character?—or can this be the abode of the living? There is about this palace an air of immutability—of serenity—like the cloudless sky which spreads above its terraces. Are the inhabitants changeable, or invariable like the climate in which they live?"

Roused from his reverie, Epergos asked the steward why the entrances were thus open up to the top of the pylones, and why the lintels of the doors were severed.

"Because," replied the steward, "it is the custom on certain solemn occasions to admit processions consisting of persons who bring the rents due to the nomarch. And in front of each corporation are borne very lofty standards. The height and splendour of these standards is a matter of rivalry among them. With this arrangement the standard-bearers can enter without lowering them. Each deposits its offering on the credence or sometimes at the feet of the nomarch, and the procession leaves the palace

in perfect order by the other portal. The live animals offered to the nomarch are not admitted into the palace; but you will see a large platform on the western side, opposite the river, where the nomarch receives beneath a tent the dues paid in live animals, fruits, and grain."

Outside the doorway opening into the long private court, west of the hall, Epergos examined with curiosity two seated colossal stone statues on either side of the gateway, and which he thought very beautiful.

The steward told him that the one represented king Cerpheres and the other his wife; and that these statues had been erected by the nomarch in their honour, and to testify his gratitude to them.

In fact, long hieroglyphical inscriptions graved on the pedestal, recorded the names and extraordinary virtues of these two personages, and described the nomarch's grateful feelings towards his sovereigns.

This second court appeared to the visitors still more beautiful than the first; and the attention of Epergos was especially attracted by the two fine halls situated at either extremity, with their entrance pillars and the columns which supported the richly painted ceilings.

Following their guide into one of the lateral passages, they were allowed to visit some of the bedchambers, which were then untenanted. Each of them contained a bedstead of painted wood, furnished with cushions and covered with linen tissues of various colours; a large chest, likewise of painted wood, to hold clothes; a chair, a small table, and a lamp. By day these bedrooms were lighted only by the doorways left unclosed which opened on the passage. But the sunshine in these regions is so vivid that these rooms received a very soft and pleasant reflected light while they preserved a cool temperature. Their walls were decorated with paintings representing

persons, and which were accompanied by explanatory inscriptions.

The bedrooms of the upper story, opening on the terraces which formed the covering of the passages,* were decorated in the same manner; and in front of the doors were hung awnings sheltering the interior from the sun's rays.

From these small terraces there was a view of the two gardens stretching lengthwise, in which were planted sycamores, palm-trees, mimosas, orange-trees, and some rare shrubs; two narrow canals irrigated them. On each side, facing the chambers, was to be seen a small portico of wood, fronting cells in which provisions of all kinds were ranged in perfect order,—fruits, grain, honey, vegetables, and drinks—wine and beer.

But these parts of the habitation were not accessible to persons not of the household, and the servants who had charge of these storehouses were responsible for their contents; they were quartered in the two end buildings of the great western court. Around this beautiful mansion were planted vast gardens, regularly laid out, with canals, fish-ponds, storehouses, and everything necessary for their cultivation.

What was especially pleasing in this residence was the order, regularity, and cleanliness.

Slaves, constantly occupied in keeping things in proper condition, were under the surveillance of overseers appointed for each department of work; and the negligent or lazy were recalled to their duties by the whip.

The steward had the control of each of these departments, and exacted an account of all that came in or went out, of the consumption, the stores, the receipts, and disbursements.

* See the section, figure 39.

At the end of the gardens were sheds filled with animals in great number—oxen, horses, and asses; and in a large poultry-yard were to be seen fowls, geese, and ducks, carefully fed for the owner's table.

"Well," said Epergos to his companion when they had taken leave of the steward, "it appears to me that things have undergone some change in this fertile region since we first visited it some centuries ago. Its great men are beginning to erect dwellings much more sumptuous and durable than those of past times. What dost thou think of it, Doxius?"

"I think that these dwellings are truly wonderful compared with those we formerly saw; but these Egyptians have at least the good sense to keep to the old forms. They have made no change in their religion; their laws have been developed strictly in the direction of their original intent; and if the palaces of the great have superseded the mud houses and caverns of their ancestors, I maintain that these buildings are in conformity with traditions religiously adhered to."

"Granted: but our friends who inhabit the shores of the Nile are already employing large stones in these buildings of theirs; and though they still make walls of unbaked bricks, and terraces of clay on timber joists, I believe that the wealthy persons of this country will some day be dissatisfied with such rude modes of building, and erect dwellings made entirely of durable materials. Who can tell if they will not deem even these limestones, which they have attained so much skill in working, too fragile, and try to get materials of a still harder kind?"

"That is a desire which I fully approve, for they would thus perpetuate for ages to come the forms first adopted."

"Be it so," returned Epergos; "but it seems to me that if they adopt materials different from those formerly

employed, they would also do well to modify the forms of these buildings. Since in building they no longer confine themselves to tempered clay and reeds, it is unreasonable to adhere to the forms suitable to those primitive methods."

"Why should they change those forms?"

"Because they employ other modes of procedure."

"Always this mania for reasoning!" muttered Doxius.

Without noticing his companion's remark, Epergos continued :

"These Egyptians used to make supports consisting of wood and bundles of reeds ; now they are erecting stone columns ; yet they try to reproduce in these hard materials, superimposed in layers, the appearance assumed by those materials composed of vegetable substances. I wager that if they take it into their heads to crown their edifices in like manner with layers of stone, they will give such crownings the form assumed by these projections of reeds and clay which appear so ingenious, and which, indeed, are so."

"Well ! where would be the harm ? It will thus be known that the early Egyptians constructed their dwellings with mud and reeds only ;—it will be known that they wished to preserve the remembrance of their first efforts ; that they adopted a form of architecture which approved itself to them ; that they were wise enough to adhere to it. Dost thou discover anything to find fault with in the palace we have just visited?"

"No, indeed ; I think it perfect : everything about it is wisely and well conceived, and admirably arranged ; but my reason none the less assures me that it is whimsical to simulate in stone a building of mud and canes. It would appear to me equally whimsical for our Aryas to reproduce in stone the houses formed with trunks of trees we once saw on the upper Indus."

"If these Aryas are sensible people, which I can scarcely believe, as they were so ready to listen to thee, they would prove their good sense by so doing."

"Or rather that they hardly reason at all!" replied Epergos.

"Wilt thou maintain that the Egyptians do not reason? they who display such perfect harmony in their buildings,—who possess and apply those rules of numbers which thou thyself admittest to be admirable?"

"I scarcely know; but there is something in their ways that embarrasses me, or rather which does not altogether satisfy me."

"Because thou art a restless spirit, and seekest for something beyond what is and ought to be."

"Listen," continued Epergos, "and have the goodness to spare me thy moralising. These inhabitants of the valley of the Nile live in an exceptional climate; they have not to struggle against frost or tempests. They are surrounded by deserts, and enjoy all the necessities of life without much trouble on their part. The activity and labour to which those less favoured are obliged to have recourse in withstanding the elements or in repelling numerous and rapacious neighbours, they apply to the increase of their wealth. Already they have begun to construct dwellings such as are found nowhere else on the earth. They will advance yet farther; they will be able to surprise future generations by the grandeur and strength of their buildings; for all their energy and power of production is devoted to the satisfaction of a self-seeking ideal. They aim to secure a comfortable life, and attempt to perpetuate this pleasurable existence beyond the limits imposed by the Creator; for they carefully preserve the remains of their dead, and place them in sumptuous dwellings, as if the dead could be sensible to terrestrial honours and advantages. This con-

ception of life is very attractive, I allow ; but if ever these peoples find themselves in contact with a hardy race accustomed to privations, like some of those we have seen, I very much fear they will be unable to offer any serious resistance, and their wonderful industry will fail to preserve them from ruin ; for they will not know how to conform to the necessities imposed by times and circumstances, averse as they are to change in any respect."

"Dangerous spirit," replied Doxius, "wouldst thou presume to defend the impious innovators who should dare to impose their changeful caprices on this judicious people?"

"I am not engaged in defending anything ; I am simply investigating and reasoning."

"The Egyptians should, on the contrary, be regarded as an example to the nations ; and the barbarians who approach their frontiers, if they have the least glimmer of common sense, will not fail to imitate them. The Creator has appointed them directors of the nations ; if they are to perish, it is because the earth is given over to fools—to the spirit of recklessness and disaster."

"Well !" returned Epergos, "shall I tell thee my whole feeling on the subject ? . . . This country oppresses me ; this people with its regulations and laws embracing every particular of life, its prudence and respect for traditions ; this ever cloudless sky ; this river with its punctually recurring irrigation ; these dwellings and gardens where everything is methodic and calculated ; this immutable social hierarchy—all this wearies me to the last degree. My blood seems to stagnate, and my mind to become a blank. I must away !"

"I shall stay."

"Adieu, then."

CHAPTER XI.

THE GREAT MIGRATIONS.

TO the south of a chain of barren mountains stretches a vast gravelly plain. Here and there in the neighbourhood of streams are meadows and stunted trees. In summer these streams, confined within precipitous banks, are almost dry. In winter, on the contrary, they overflow and inundate part of the lands, bringing down with them mud and gravel. Winds from the east continually sweep these plains, and all vegetable growths bend towards the west.

Men are seen in these deserts only occasionally ; passing southwards in winter, and towards the mountains in summer. Of nomadic habit, they drive their flocks and herds before them, but do not tarry in the arid plain.

We observe, however, a long train of waggons journeying westwards. They are filled with women, children, furniture, poles, and boards ; drawn by oxen and asses, they are conducted by men for the most part on horseback. A cloud of dust accompanies and precedes them. The sun is scorching, and the caravan moves forward with painful effort. At some distance in its rear, follow beasts of prey, which, with outstretched necks, are snuffing the air, stopping for a moment, or moving hither and thither. If some beast of burden, exhausted by fatigue, has been abandoned on the route, these beasts of prey immediately fall upon it, fight furiously around it, and tear off portions

of its flesh, which they carry away to devour. Flights of birds of prey accompany the column on its flanks, uttering ominous cries.

The horsemen who guide the caravan are tall, muscular, and sunburnt; their features are handsome, and their clear bright eyes inspire respect. They are dressed in white tunics with short sleeves, their legs are bare, and they are shod with sandals fastened by thongs. Their head-dress consists of a kind of ball covered with white stuff, and sometimes terminated by a narrow veil which falls as far as the middle of the back, and protects the nape of the neck.

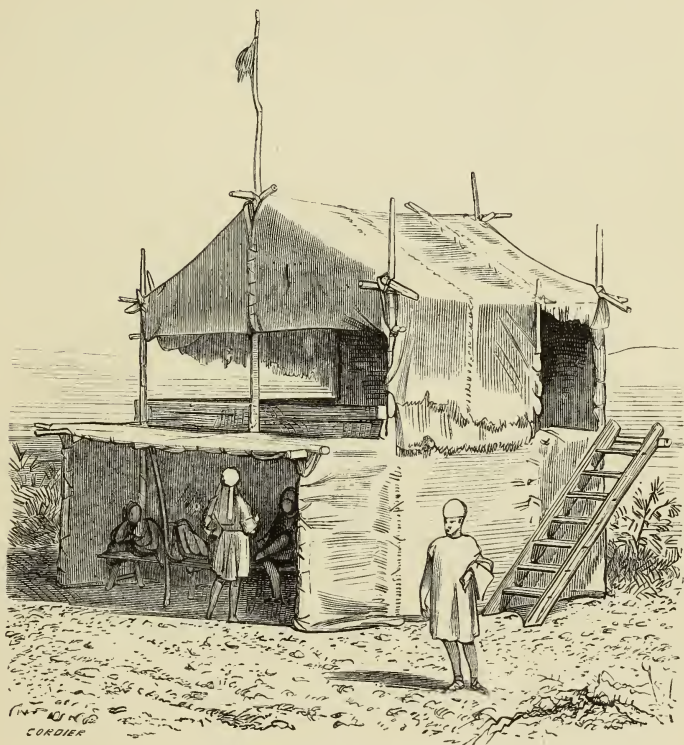
The women, seated or reclining in the waggons, are completely enveloped in veils of light stuff edged with rich embroideries of various colours. Their skin, shaded from the sunshine, is white, and their limbs are delicate. They are of medium height; and a mass of light chestnut hair falls over their shoulders in thick plaits.

Among the more youthful some may be distinguished as remarkably beautiful. They are conversing and laughing together.

Between the waggons flocks of sheep, long-horned goats, and herds of heifers are being driven along, over which large black dogs with pointed ears and sharp noses are keeping watch, panting as they go.

In the evening the caravan halts on the bank of a stream partly dried up; the cloud of dust follows its course westward; and soon a great stir is observable in the long train. The sheep are bleating, the dogs barking, the heifers and the oxen uttering their deep lowings, amid the shouts of the men and the neighing of the horses. The women and children are getting down from the waggons, from which the poles and large rolls of woollen stuffs are being taken; for the caravan anticipates a long

sojourn in this place. The poles are fixed in the ground and fastened together with thongs; next the boards are put across, and the stuffs cover the whole. Thus a great number of huts are set up, all presenting the same appearance (figure 41), and consisting of a low room in which at



Tent of the Arya in the Desert.—FIG. 41.

night the horned cattle are housed. The family ascend to the upper part by a short ladder. In front is a sort of porch; it is the place for rest in the daytime. When the sun is set we see fires lighted in every quarter; the women prepare the meals, and all take their food by the light of the flames. Soon afterwards the sheep are folded near the

huts, the horses are tied to the stakes of the porches, and the horned cattle brought in. The families one after another ascend to their booths to sleep, and let down the awnings, for the nights are cold. Each man in his turn watches beneath the porch and keeps up the fire. The lion, disdaining to follow the caravan by day, sometimes presents himself in the middle of the night, alone, with head aloft and measured tread. He prowls around the encampment, watches his opportunity, and at a bound, strangles a horse or an unwary watcher. Shouts arise on all sides, and the men armed with bows, heavy clubs, or lances, fall upon the terrible animal. These incidents are of rather frequent occurrence ; a good watch, therefore, is kept in the encampment ; and in certain places ditches are dug, concealed by branches of trees and grass on which a dead animal is placed. But the lion is rarely seduced into these traps, while hyenas are often caught.

The lion never repeats his attack, and if he fails to secure his prey he retreats. But if he is wounded by one of the watchers he becomes furious, and then there is a terrible combat lasting sometimes far into the night. The men issue from all quarters, and no one in the camp sleeps.

These tents are set up only when it is intended to make some stay in a place, to give rest to man and beast. At such times the men employ themselves in hunting, for game never fails in these deserts, while the women repair the harness and clothing.

Epergos on a certain evening fell in with one of these encampments. Being unarmed he excited no mistrust, and as he was without baggage, no cupidity. Moreover he had much serviceable knowledge ; for example, that of remedies for man or beast in case of disease. Accordingly he had not spent more than four-and-twenty hours among

them when he had secured a welcome from the migrating colony.

Sometimes the men entrusted with the safety of the encampment would unite in groups of twos or threes, and to keep themselves awake would talk of the incidents of the past or of their hopes for the future. Epergos liked to interrogate them and to hear their recitals. So one night he sat down by one of the watchers, a grey-bearded man, who gave him the statement that follows:—

“It is twenty years since we left the shores of the great river which descends from the Holy Mountains; I was then young, and we had been obliged to abandon our dwellings in consequence of a battle in which half our able-bodied men had perished.”

“Were those who defeated you of a different race?”

“No, they were of the same blood.”

“Then why these battles?”

“We possessed fertile lands and pleasant dwellings at the foot of the Sacred Mountains, not far from the place where the great river passes them to flow southwards.

“Our fathers had been settled there for a great number of years. But from the mountains and from the great plateau which is on this side to the north, there came down tribes desirous of enjoying the riches of the soil. At first our fathers received them with pleasure, for they saw in them brethren who spoke the same language and resembled themselves. At first there was no want of land, and all could have a share. Fresh tribes, however, were always arriving from the mountains; for you know that Mount Meron is the great cradle of the noble race. One day we were obliged to tell the new-comers that the land was full and they would not be able to find a place. Many went southwards in the hope of finding fresh lands; others bent their course towards the rising sun.

"It seems that a great number perished, for they had to contend with nations numerous as the pebbles of the torrent. Some perhaps went further. We were none the less subjected to constant embarrassments in consequence of the number of tribes that continued to pass over our lands. That was the cause of our disasters. We wanted to compel the mountaineers to follow another route, and to leave us to the peaceful enjoyment of our possessions. We took up arms, and for several seasons we caused our territory to be respected. But at last, by dint of ever-increasing numbers, these mountaineers ended in surrounding us on all sides. The struggle was terrible. There I witnessed the death of my father, my brother, and many of my kin.

"The victors then wished to impose conditions upon us ; rather than submit to them, having collected our flocks and herds, and placed the women and children and our most valued property in waggons, and set fire to our houses, we quitted the land of our fathers ; and in order that we might not encounter on our way that great body which had gone towards the rising sun or towards the south, and that we might not have to blush for our defeat among them, we betook ourselves towards the setting sun, keeping near the mountains."

"It is twenty winters, you say, since then ?"

"Yes, twenty winters, and many of our number have died ; and children have been born. In order to find the means of living along our route we separated into twelve bodies, and we march at intervals of a year."

"Will you give me a full account of your adventures ?"

"When we had all left our possessions, our number being about twenty thousand, including men, women, and children, we reached after five or six moons a chain of high hills, which stretch from the Sacred Mountains towards the

south. We had lost many of our people in consequence of the privations we had to suffer and the want of sufficient nourishment ; for we had nothing to live on but our flocks and herds and what we found on our route.

“ There we resolved to stay and settle if possible ; the country presented an inviting appearance ; it was well stocked with game and watered by numerous rivulets.

“ In this country the cursed race of the *Dasyus* swarmed in great numbers. Timorous and feeble, we had easily subjugated them. We compelled them to till the ground, tend our herds, and supply us with food. We had already begun to build houses, and the lands were apportioned among us, when these wretches dared to attack us, for they were very strong in numbers. That fatal night still lives in my remembrance. . . . The wind was raging violently. It was just at the time when the snows begin to disappear from the slopes of the mountains. Confused cries warned us of the danger, and fires soon broke out in the plain. Most of us inhabited the higher grounds, enabling us to see to a distance. Our people assembled in small bodies in haste, but the tempest prevented us from hearing each other's voices and acting in concert. Women came running towards us wild with despair ; the *Dasyus*, armed with clubs, were killing all they met, and setting fire to dwellings—advancing in a compact mass, howling furiously. Thus suddenly attacked, all would be lost, if the wretches should gain the heights. Each group perceived the danger, and without losing time in endeavouring to join that near it thought only of bravely defending itself.

“ With waggons, unfinished houses, rocks, and trees, they made themselves a rampart ; and when the scoundrels came on like a herd of wolves, they were assailed from every quarter by darts, stones, and sharp arrows.

"Having no plan of action, and seeing many of their number fall, they recoiled. This enabled those of us who were farthest off from the attack to unite in bodies large enough to take the offensive. We made a great massacre of the wretches. But advancing day showed us how numerous they were ; for some of the neighbouring tribes had joined those among which we lived.

"We should have been wearied to no purpose, if we had gone on mowing down these scoundrels like the rushes of the marsh ; the mass was so dense that we should always have found some left to kill. We therefore retired to the heights, taking with us our most valuable movables in our waggons. Having held a council the following night, we resolved to pass the mountains, and to seek in the direction of the setting sun a less populous territory.

"Having cut down trees to form a rampart, we left behind us a thousand of our warriors, who were to stop the advance of the Dasyus while the retreat was being effected.

"In this passage across the mountains, we lost a great number of horses and waggons. Women and children died of cold during the nights. But the Dasyus did not attempt to pursue us. At the end of eight days we came down into a desert plain, but where game was not wanting. There we remained several moons, living by fishing and hunting and on what remained of our cattle. It was then that we resolved to pursue our search for homes towards the west ; taking care to go in separate bodies, so as not to exhaust the country, and that we might always find game.

"What more need I say? Keeping always on the flanks of the mountains, so that we might meet only rivulets or torrents narrow enough to be easily crossed, we also found wood, game, and sometimes shelter in the

forests. Stopping where life was most tolerable we reached this place."

"And did many other detachments pass before you?"

"We form part of the last."

"Do you know whether those who went before you have taken up a fixed residence?"

"They have done so; for we have always kept up a communication between the different detachments by messengers who travel several together."

"And what have you learned by these means?"

"That our predecessors have settled in a fertile country, watered by numerous rivers, and bordered by two chains of mountains, seven days' march apart, and both stretching towards the setting sun. On the northern side, beyond one of these chains of mountains, is a vast extent of salt water which is the end of the earth. There are also great lakes of fresh water. Near the mountains, on the southern side, our brethren have settled and have built houses."

"And did your brethren find men in these countries?"

"They found men with a dark skin, but they drove them away."

"And what were the occupations of these men?"

"They kept flocks and herds and lived in tents made of skins of beasts. This is what the travelling messengers reported to us."

"We are eager to reach that land where our brethren are happy, surrounded by their numerous and prosperous families, possessors of vast domains. We shall fight with them against the men of the north, and those who come from the south to spoil them of their goods; for the man of noble race is born to fight to establish his power over the accursed races, and to be the master of the earth."

CHAPTER XII.

HOW THE EARLIEST DWELLINGS OF THE ARYAS SETTLED IN UPPER MEDIA WERE CONSTRUCTED.

THESE emigrants who had made their way from the valley of Cashmere, and had settled at first on the upper course of the Indus, were thus slowly traversing the southern slopes of the long chain of mountains which stretches from Mount Merou to the Caspian Sea. They had settled there in a fertile country, sheltered from the north wind by the Caspian Mountains, and from the south wind by Mount Zagrus—the chain bearing that name being parallel to the Caspian Mountains. Divided as is their custom into tribes, they had built small straggling towns, between whose houses were spaces reserved for tillage and pasture. This country, which occupies an elevated position and is crossed by mountains, though somewhat cold in the winter season, is very hot in summer. The emigrants had found races already settled in this country: some of them were living in caverns, hollowed out by natural causes or laboriously excavated; they occupied the slopes of the hills, and were black; the others, who kept to the plains, lived in tents, were nomad in their habits, and possessed numerous flocks and herds on which they subsisted. These had a yellow skin with hair and eyes black; they were daring and predatory, and followed no industrial pursuits.

Not being accustomed to assemble in large numbers to fight, they retired gradually before the Aryan emigrants in

a northerly and westerly direction, not without having done all possible damage to the new settlers.

The Aryas, therefore, soon found themselves isolated and obliged to provide for their own wants. In these regions they had no longer around them, as on the Upper Indus, a numerous and submissive native population whom they could compel to work. The pastoral race that occupied this district before them, had neither cities nor villages, followed no industrial occupation, and despised all manual labour. Proud and barbarous, and continually changing the place of their abode, it was impossible either to subjugate or to plunder them, since they possessed nothing but wandering herds.

As to the black inhabitants of the mountains, they were an abject race, subsisting by the chase and on wild herbs,—in any case unable to assist the colonists, even had they the will to do so. The latter, moreover, still too small in number and too ignorant of the country, dared not risk themselves in the mountain defiles occupied by the blacks. Those of the Aryas who had attempted to penetrate into the gorges of the Zagrus range had not returned.

For some time the Aryas were satisfied to live in huts such as had been their dwellings in the desert; but these habitations did not preserve them from heat or cold, and were liable to be destroyed by the tempests that not unfrequently arose between the two mountain chains. They wished therefore to erect houses like those of their fathers, wood being abundant. These dwellings, however, in a country where extremes of temperature prevailed, scarcely sheltered their inhabitants better either against frost or sun. They had observed that the blacks who lived nearest the valleys—the only race with whom they could carry on barter—in default of natural caverns had constructed for themselves actual burrows, by hollow-

ing out the ground, and raising round the ditch a wall of pebbles and mud, placing across these very low walls trunks of trees covered with a thick layer of kneaded earth.

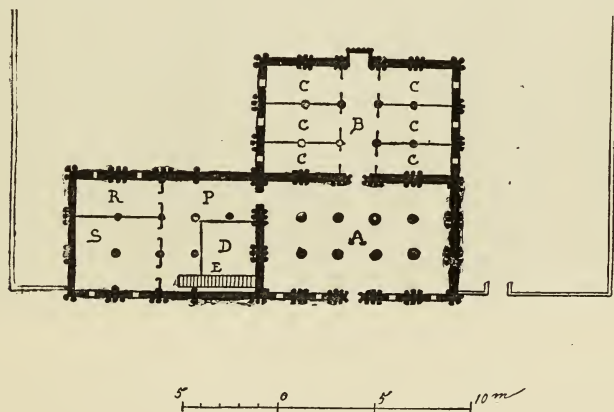
These dwellings which were cool in summer and warm in winter, but always damp, low, and noisome, could not approve themselves to the Aryas; but reflecting that the nearly equal temperature of these sordid abodes at all seasons of the year was owing in great part to the thick layer of earth which served as roofing, they resolved to employ the same method, though with interiors not below the level of the ground.

Blows with a stick, and the prospect of a regular supply of food, induced a considerable number of the blacks to labour in building the new dwellings of the Aryas. But the first attempts were not successful. The walls of mud and pebbles which, when scarcely so high as a man, would support the transverse trunks of trees that formed the ceiling, gave way under the load when it was attempted to raise them higher. Moreover, the settlers wished to have spacious rooms, and the mass of earth superposed made the beams bend, rendering props necessary. On the whole these new dwellings presented, in spite of the exertions of the colonists, a very singular series of tentative efforts when the last caravan of emigrants arrived in Upper Media.

The first thing to be done was to allot lands to the newcomers whom Epergos had joined. He had acquired a certain degree of authority among them, for on several occasions the emigrants had had reason to congratulate themselves on having adopted his suggestions. He was, therefore, consulted as to the most suitable method of erecting houses with the materials at hand, and so as to meet the requirements of the climate. Epergos remem-

bering the methods he had seen adopted on the Lower Nile, and considering that the country possessed wood in abundance, and that the Aryas had long been accustomed to employ this material, spoke thus to those who consulted him: "As you recognise the advantage of employing earth, both for raising walls and covering the ceilings of your dwellings, to preserve you from cold and heat, while you perceive that an erection made with earth needs a support, because it has not consistence enough to sustain itself—why do you not make a skeleton of timber, not only substantial enough to resist the storms, but also to keep up the earthen walls and ceilings? You want large rooms;—well, then, prop up the ceilings with trunks of trees, so that they will not bend under the load. In a word, make a house of wood and cover it with earth."

They set to work, therefore, and soon obtained satisfactory structures. The following is a description of one of these houses, figure 42. Conformably to the custom of



Plan of Median House.—FIG. 42.

the Aryas, the habitation being placed on an elevated spot, or on a raised platform, commanded a view of the vicinity.

A large room A was set out, and to support its heavy ceiling, eight trunks of trees forked at the top divided it into three bays. Adjoining this was a passage B, communicating with six chambers, and at the end a small sanctuary; for as the Aryas had then temples and priests, the religious ceremonies were no longer performed in every family. At D a small court with a portico P, communicating with



Interior of Median House.—FIG. 43.

a kitchen R, and the room S allotted to the servants or dependants. A flight of wooden steps gave access to the terrace of the main building. As indicated in the plan, the buildings were constructed with trunks of trees, placed vertically in double threes, leaving the thickness of a wall

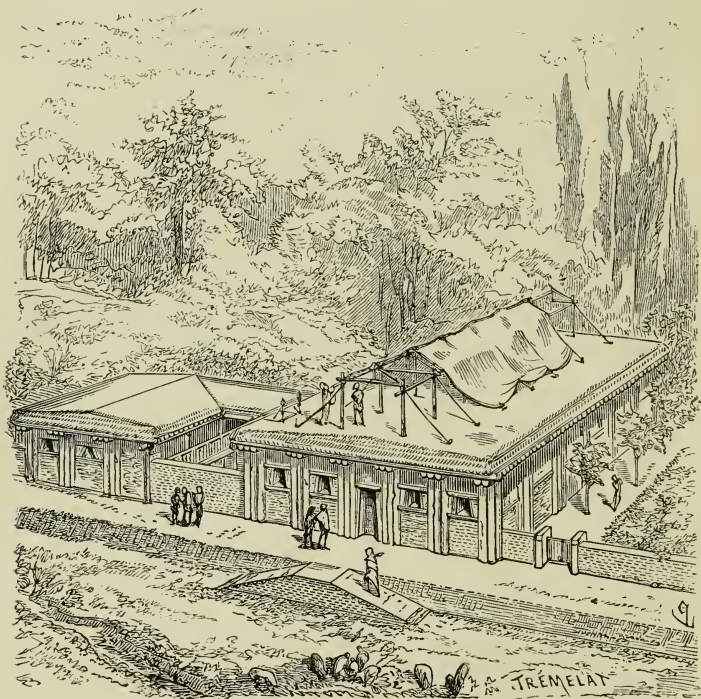
of earth between them, and of forked posts. These posts received on their fork (see figure 43, which represents 'the interior of the large room), a cap consisting of a thick trunk end split into two. On each of these caps were laid three horizontal trunks of trees, which were supported at their ends by the three interior and the three exterior vertical trunks. Next, on these cross timbers were placed other trunks longitudinally forming a ceiling within and a projection without, to protect the walls from the rain. Thus the whole building being raised in wood, they filled the intervals with pebbles and earth, and on the ceiling placed a thick layer of earth and stubble well kneaded, and then of moistened clay and fine sand. Inside, mats covered the floor of beaten earth.

Figure 44 gives a view of this habitation in perspective. During summer they put up tents on the terraces to enjoy the fresh air of the evening and also to sleep there; a method suggested by the habit acquired by the colonists during their long sojourn in the desert, of passing all their nights under the tent, and by their feeling uncomfortable in shutting themselves up to sleep during the hot season.

Half a century after their settlement in Upper Media, the Aryas had attained a condition of prosperity, had become very numerous, and had begun to give some degree of elegance to their dwellings by dressing the wood with an axe and adorning the walls with paintings. They were acquainted with the art of manufacturing woollen stuffs variously dyed, and began to give themselves to culture; for they had succeeded in enslaving many of the black inhabitants of the mountains, whose defiles were henceforth known to them, and used for hunting grounds.

Several of their number during the great expeditions undertaken with a view to hunt wild animals and horses

(of which there were numbers at large in the country), had sometimes crossed the Zagrus chain, and had observed beyond it an immense and rich plain inhabited only by shepherds who possessed large flocks. These Median hunters, who went out in large bodies, had sometimes even succeeded in carrying off some of these flocks; so that



View of Median House.—FIG. 44.

the Medes nearest the mountains began to assemble in considerable troops, and traversing the defiles, would fall suddenly on the shepherds, and drive off the cattle, which they sold as soon as they returned to Media.

These repeated expeditions irritated the shepherds, and

having concerted a place of ambuscade, they attacked and massacred a large body of hunters. Great was the excitement through all Media, and it was resolved to take vengeance on the shepherds.

To the number of about four thousand men, the Medes issued from the southern mountains, and spread through the level country, carried off a considerable number of cattle, and killed all who offered resistance.

The shepherds, assembling in their turn, passed the mountains, and fell suddenly on the lands of the Medes nearest the defiles, killed the inhabitants, burned the houses, and plundered the fields. They spared only the women, whom they carried away with them.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NOMADIC AND THE STATIONARY SEMITES.

TALL and lean, with skin of bistre tint, slender limbs and black hair, the Semites form that large pastoral population which occupies all the territory watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. They live in tents, and cultivate a few fields, sometimes at one spot, sometimes at another ; for they are not accustomed to tarry long in the same place. They have neither cities nor villages. Temperate in their habits, their flocks and scanty crops suffice for their subsistence, dress, and dwellings,—which are only tents of stuffs made of camels' hair and wool. The horse is their faithful companion ; for they never travel on foot. They take as many wives as they can support. Sometimes the dryness of the season obliges them to go in search of distant pastures, or destroys their cattle. Then they assemble in large bodies, and fall upon the neighbouring country, where they hope to find booty. Thus they have often harassed the peoples of the Lower Nile, for they do not hesitate to traverse the desert in search of plunder.

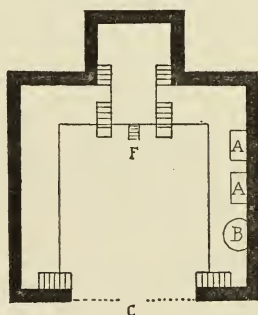
They may be vanquished, but they cannot be subjugated, since they are not attached to the soil, and elude pursuit. The desert is theirs, and if they take possession of an inhabited region, they drive away or kill its inhabitants, and turn it into a desert. They have no industrial pursuits or arts, though on occasions they traffic with more address and skill than probity. Nevertheless, they practise

hospitality, and the stranger who is admitted among them has nothing to fear, especially if he has no property.

As regards the stationary Semites, they occupy the western region between the shores of the interior sea and the right bank of the Upper Euphrates. They engage in commerce and in certain industrial pursuits, have ports, and sail to distant lands. The districts they inhabit are mountainous, dry, and arid; there are only sixty days in the year on which rain falls, and the torrents which descend from the mountains are quickly dried up. The country, however, is cultivated; for the inhabitants construct vast tanks which receive water during the rainy season, and enable them to irrigate the ground.

Contrary to the Aryan custom, their houses are in groups, and form cities or straggling towns surrounded by walls to protect them against the incursions of the nomadic Semites and the men of yellow race, who sometimes make an onslaught from the north.

They also construct large vessels, in which they cross the sea, and carry on commerce along the shores of the Delta. On the south, their country is bounded by the desert, and extends nearly to Lower Egypt.



Plan of Primitive Southern Syrian Habitation.—FIG. 45.

The following is the method in which they usually build their dwellings, figure 45. Around an area of 25 to 30 cubits they build a thick wall of pise or dry stones, leaving a void space in front, and forming a quadrangular space of about 8 cubits on the opposite side. Along this wall, in the interior, they raise a platform of about 4 cubits

wide and two cubits in height at most. At the further end the platform is a little higher. Small flights of steps facilitate the ascent to these platforms. Only the recess at the back is covered in a permanent way by means of trunks of palm-trees or cypress placed close together, on which a floor is made of kneaded earth. It is there that the family sleep at night, and shelter themselves by day from the sun.

During the rainy season light frames of canes are erected, on which mats are placed.

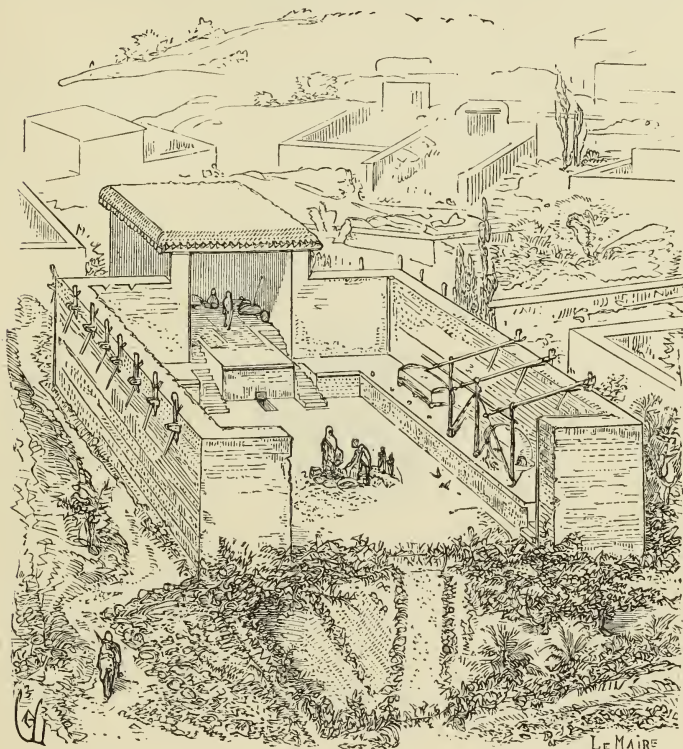
On these platforms troughs of pise (at A) are constructed, in which provisions are kept ; and a small circular fowl-house also of pise at B. A fire is lighted in the middle of the area for cooking. A thorn hedge protects the open side, and the entrance C is closed by a thorny trunk placed across it. Under the platform at the back end a cistern is excavated, to which there is a descent by the small flight of steps F.

Figure 46 gives a view of these dwellings, which sometimes have very small gardens in front. Rich families possess larger dwellings, but which are all constructed on the same principle. In these, rich stuffs sometimes take the place of mats, and woollen carpets cover the floor of the recess.

Paintings on coatings of earth garnish the walls, and in place of a hedge are placed strong barriers of painted wood artistically worked. Curtains shut in the recess.

No great length of time had elapsed since the earliest expeditions of the Medes into the territory of the Semites, when fresh bodies of Aryan emigrants advanced along the Caspian mountains. Land in sufficient quantity was no longer to be found, and the new-comers were not received as brothers, but as troublesome strangers. The last in the field, however, were not disposed to retrograde,

and saw with envious eyes the prosperous establishments of their predecessors. This occasioned frequent contests; and as fortune favoured sometimes one party and sometimes the other, and peace was incessantly troubled without any advantage to either, the chiefs of the tribes assembled, and came to the determination that since the



View of Primitive Southern Syrian House.—FIG. 46.

territory of Upper Media could not support so many families, a great expedition should be organised, to occupy the lands on the south-east, beyond the mountains, and to drive away the shepherds, since they had always to dread their depredations.

But on descending towards the south, on the shores of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the emigrants found no longer nomadic peoples, but cities and villages. ¶ During a long course of years the emigrants from Media had to carry on a struggle with the peoples settled on the fertile shores of these two rivers, but at last they subjugated them, and were blended into one nation with them.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE ASSYRIANS.

A LONG time afterwards, the country watered by the Tigris and Euphrates formed the rich and powerful kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon. They were conquered by Thoutmes III., a king of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty; but this conquest only brought into that country elements of civilisation and art, which were still wanting to render it the queen of Western Asia.

The Assyrians, however, did not submit to the conquerors without struggles; and, having formed a league with the other peoples of Asia, they ultimately enfranchised themselves from Egyptian rule under Ramses II. and Ramses III. Soon afterwards they subjugated Media, their parent state.

Till the epoch of Egyptian supremacy, the Assyrians, like their neighbours the Medes, erected only very simple buildings, destitute of ornamentation. They made it a principle not to make sculptured representations of the divinities; but the country which they occupied had necessitated certain modifications in the structure of their habitations.

The shores of the Tigris and Euphrates present only alluvial plains; wood, suitable for building, is rare. For ten months of the year, no cloud appears in a sky whose clearness is incomparable. The heat is oppressive and incessant.

With their taste for the arts, the Egyptians had intro-

duced into these regions their astronomical and geometrical knowledge, a civilisation of some degree of refinement, and an exact and rigorous administrative organisation. If the populations on the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates were able to profit by these advantages, they at the same time lost those austere and simple habits which they once possessed. The families of Aryan origin made a point, however, of preserving the purity of their blood, and were unwilling to form alliances with the subjugated natives. Convinced of the superiority of the Aryan race, these families constituted an aristocratic caste; and, considering the smallness of their numbers as compared with the subject people, they made it their object to become predominant, not only in intelligence and bravery, but also numerically. With this view, the superior caste adopted polygamy, and it was, in fact, no rare thing to find in Assyria persons of noble race surrounded by a hundred children or more. But this means of increase impaired rather than strengthened the prestige of the dominant superior race. In fact, the Semitic maidens were beautiful, and many of them entered the harems of the Assyrian nobles; so that after some generations, the Aryan and Semitic blood were considerably interfused. The Aryas possess an exalted genius. With a poetic taste they combine a passionate devotion to the study of natural phenomena. They are brave, and ambitious for power; but they have only a moderate aptitude for the practice of the plastic arts. The Semites, on the other hand, inclined to simple ideas, contemplative, adventurous, and independent, have a special aptitude for all that is connected with calculation. They are commercial as a race, and industrious individually; for they do not readily form combinations with a view to a collective undertaking; they are, it

must also be observed, not artists, and have a kind of contempt for those who devote themselves to a manual art. The alliance of the two races, however, always produces the elements which are most favourable to the development of the plastic arts.

Epergos began to communicate his observations on this head to his companion Doxius, who had come with the Egyptians into Assyria, and settled in this country. Epergos, who had seen the buildings erected by the Aryas, from the time they quitted the cradle of their race till their settlement in Media, had assured himself that these works were far from having attained the value, in point of art, of those raised by the Egyptians, or even the yellow race of the far East, during the same lapse of time. He had also seen the buildings of the Semites on reaching the banks of the Tigris, and during a journey he had made on the shores of the inland sea. He perceived, therefore, that the dwellings of the men of this race did not vary during the course of many centuries, and had no pretensions to art. But since the influence of the Egyptians had made itself felt in Assyria, and the mixture of the two races, Aryan and Semitic, was being effected by the force of circumstances, the buildings began to attain a rare perfection, and to be enriched with sculptures and paintings; the luxury of their dwellings was daily increasing.

Doxius was listening to his companion's remarks and allowing him to go on, appearing to be thinking of something else.

Epergos continued thus:—"Whence I should conclude that if the Egyptians have special aptitudes for the arts, it is because they are the product of a mixture of Aryan and Semitic blood." Doxius looked at him sulkily. "And," continued Epergos, unmoved by this expression

of disapproval, "did we not see in Egypt men and women of a fine complexion, ruddy cheeks, and chestnut hair, thus distinguishing them from the majority of their compatriots, whose skin is of a dingy and slightly copper-coloured hue, and whose hair is black as ebony? Observe that these exceptions belonged to the higher caste." Doxius shrugged his shoulders. "A strange thing," resumed Epergos, smiling at his companion's gesture; "these Aryas readily change their opinions; they are as variable as the waves, incessantly in quest of novelties, and tenacious in their desires; nevertheless, when left to themselves, they build to-day as they did yesterday, faithful to the traditions bequeathed by their ancestors in regard to what concerns their domestic habits. The Semites, on the other hand, have no regard for progress, they do not expect it either from their own efforts, or from the lapse of time; external things affect them but little, and in the buildings they erect for their convenience, they seek neither improvement nor change; but when these races are mingled, the race that issues from the fusion is possessed by a passion for luxury, its houses are decorated, and contribute to all the pleasures, and even the refinements, of life. Whence does this arise? Who, I wonder, causes these mysterious results?"

"Foolish thou hast been, foolish thou art, and foolish thou wilt always be," replied Doxius. "Thou speakest of races of men as if there were different races among men. Some are black, others white, others copper-coloured; what has been the cause of these differences? Climate, the sun, perhaps deterioration. I make no distinction between men, except that of wise and unwise. The wise are those who, like my friends the Egyptians, hold fast for ages to the good and serviceable which they have discovered, and interdict fools from changing anything in it. The unwise are those

who, incessantly changing, restless, and agitated, abandon the good to seek for the better, and to fall into the worse. And thou fanciest that by mingling what thou considerest as different elements, such or such a result inevitably follows? What folly! what blasphemy! Nations that are governed by wise men maintain themselves in purity and tranquillity, whatever be the colour of their skin. Those who allow themselves to be guided by thoughtless spirits, and who, with their eyes always fixed on the hazy horizon, do not see what is just at their feet, are wretched, and advance only from one form of ruin to another. It is therefore to be wished that thou mayest never be called to govern mankind!"

"Canst thou never discuss a question without using this strong language? Answer my questions, or rather come and see this royal villa which thousands of workmen are just completing here, and say if thou dost not perceive in it the result of a prodigious effort, and at the same time a mixture of dissimilar elements, contrived, nevertheless, in a way which betokens artistic power—something which recalls neither the Egyptian palaces nor the modest Median dwellings, though related to both."

"I shall perceive that the inhabitants of this country have profited by the instructions given them by the Egyptians."

"No, it is something different: but come!"

The companions soon reached a wide square platform, surmounted by buildings which did not present a symmetrical appearance, but whose lofty walls were pierced by arched gateways. Epergos was acquainted with the architect of the royal villa, to which the workmen were giving the finishing strokes. This architect, anxious no doubt to secure the approbation of the two strangers, offered to show them every part of this splendid dwelling.

"This platform, which forms the basis of the royal villa," (said the architect, while they were ascending the flight of steps on the south), "and which rises to a height of more than twenty cubits above the banks of the river, is built entirely of unburnt bricks ; its facing only is made of stone, from the mountains that separate Assyria from Media. Each of its sides measures three hundred and forty cubits. You see here at AA' the inclined planes which enable chariots to be driven even to the doors."

"But," remarked Epergos, "why this platform?"

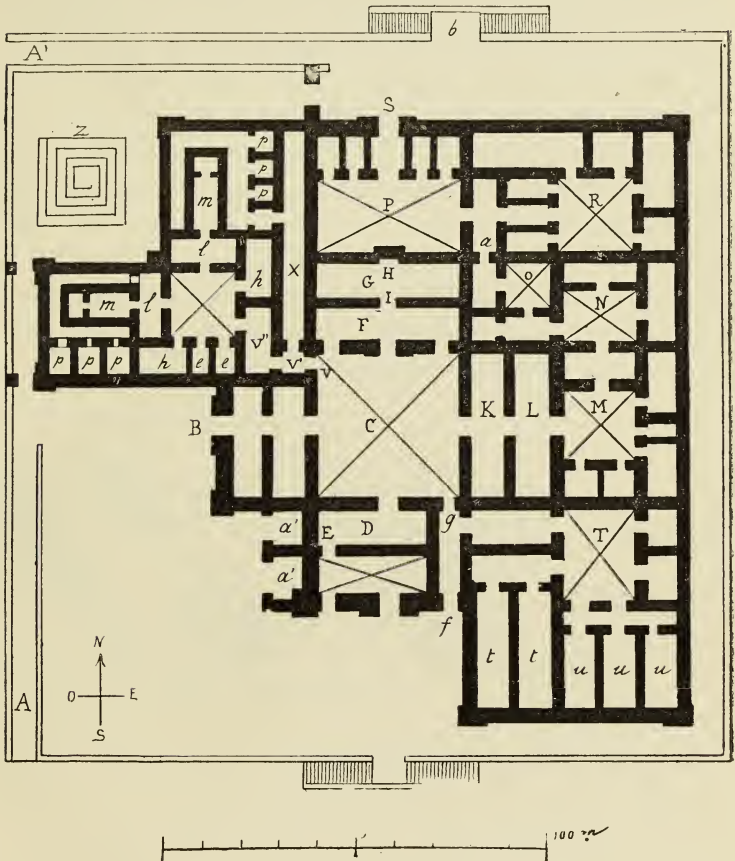
"Because it is the custom of men of noble race to build their dwellings on elevated places; it may well be imagined, therefore, that the king insists upon his palaces being placed in a commanding situation. As the country is flat, the nobles raise hills of clay to build their houses upon."

"How is it that this enormous mass of clay has not sunk under the weight of the buildings it supports?"

"This is our method of proceeding :—There is, as you are aware, abundance of clay in the plain, and it is found even below the bed of the rivers. To irrigate the land, and to secure its fertility, we dig a great number of canals which establish a communication between the two rivers. It is the clay taken from these canals that serves for buildings, so that the erection of a vast palace is a benefit to the country, for it necessitates the digging of a canal. While some of the workmen get clay out of the excavations, others are ready to receive, and carefully beat it in large basins; then, being approved by the royal surveyors, this material is thrown into flat, square moulds, and beaten and compressed in these boxes; bricks are thus obtained which are dried in the sun.

"A few hours are sufficient for this drying, since it is undesirable that the bricks should lose all their moisture; for if they did so they would break in being used. When

they have attained the proper condition, the bricklayers lay them, carefully crossing the joints, and slightly wetting the subjacent bed, to make the new bed adhere thoroughly. Thus they obtain a structure which experiences neither settling nor rending, for as this clay is kneaded and the

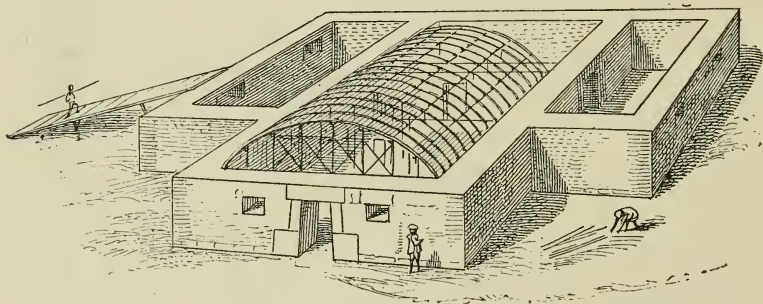


Plan of Assyrian Palace.—FIG. 47.

bricks are jointed, the mass is homogeneous. You observe, however, that the walls and the platforms are faced with large stones, which form a kind of box containing the

bricks. Moreover, part of these bricks are burned to form aqueducts, which circulate under the platform, and for arches or piers which require great solidity ; they are sometimes even glazed. You see some of these glazed bricks around and above the southern portals. But we will not linger over these details ; we shall have leisure to examine them later on. The persons who come in chariots leave their vehicles in the covered places which you see at *a'a'*, for the king alone has the privilege of entering the interior courts in a chariot. Let us proceed to the principal gate at B, for that on the south is only a secondary entrance, as I shall explain to you."

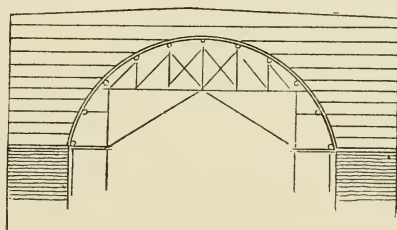
"Allow me," said Epergos, "to admire the exterior of this portal, which is crowned by an arch, a thing which I have never seen elsewhere. It surprises me strangely. Who, then, taught you this method of building ?"



Construction of Assyrian Vaulting.—FIG. 48.

"Necessity. Forests do not abound here as in Media ; it is extremely difficult to convey wood hither ; besides heat makes timber quickly perish when it is in contact with clay ; moreover, timber coverings, even when overlaid with earth—the plan adopted in some regions to the north—do not afford a sufficiently cool temperature within. We are obliged, therefore, to do without wood, and to build entirely

with clay. It was only by gradual means that our predecessors came to invent this vaulting. Seeing that beams, placed horizontally on the tops of the walls, bent under the weight of the earth forming the roofing, and were destroyed by the numerous insects that infested them, the builders of former times first conceived the idea of forming with the canes, which abound on the river banks, arches whose curvature was kept fixed by other canes placed below, vertically, horizontally, and diagonally (fig. 48). Thus they composed a substantial piece of wicker work of large dimensions. On this wicker framework they placed lighter canes lengthwise; then a first horizontal layer of soft clay, following the form of the arch as it rose, was rammed on the walls. It was allowed to dry for one day. When it



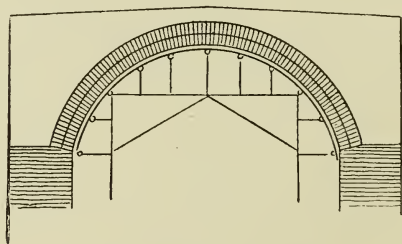
Centering with Vaulting in Horizontal Layers.—FIG. 49.

had hardened, a second layer of clay was placed on it, still following the form of the centre as it rose; and thus, proceeding by horizontal layers, to which, when laid, they allowed time to dry, the arched wicker framework gradually became completely covered with clay. As each of these layers had been deposited horizontally, the entire series presented the section (fig. 49); and the builders removed all the vertical, horizontal, and diagonal canes, leaving only those which had given the clay its curvature. There remained then a series of rods, showing which they dared not remove from under the vault, believing them necessary

to its support. But in the process of drying, these canes soon ceased to adhere to the clay, and it became evident that they were useless ; so they took them away.

“Since each layer of clay must be dried before the following one was laid, these vaults took a long time to build. Every other day, moreover, a sufficient quantity of clay must be tempered for ramming the new layer. Sometimes this clay was moistened too much, sometimes too little. Delay and even danger was the result, because the layers when too wet would crack and risk the fall of the work. Moreover, when they were near the summit of the vault, the portions of clay along the curves being very thin, would dry much more rapidly than those laid on the haunches of the vaults. It was necessary to keep these thin parts moist. All this required an excessive degree of care, and success was never certain. They were, however, already beginning to mould bricks as we mould them now.

“It was then that a man, held in great respect on account of his knowledge, and whom we call Kabu, proposed to build on the curved reeds in the same way as walls are



Vaulting made with Voussoirs. —FIG. 50.

built, that is to say, laying the bricks as you see here (fig. 50); consequently, to pass from the vertical direction in which the wall was built to the curved direction of the arch, without leaving any angle between the two directions ;

in a word, to carry the arches round by means of a complete semi-circle. Thus the wall would be continued, so to speak, curving over more and more.

"It appears that Kabu had much difficulty in getting his idea adopted; the elder men pronounced him crazed, asserting that a wall ceased to be able to stand the moment it deviated from the vertical. . . But Kabu constructed a small arch according to his system. . . You smile," said the architect to Epergos; "perhaps this account seems to you rather trivial."

"By no means," replied Epergos; "it interests me, and I like to hear you relate it; and I will tell you the sequel of it," continued he, looking askance at his companion Doxius, who was evidently ill at ease. "Kabu's model of a vault did not persuade the elders; they told him that though his principle might hold good in the small scale, such a construction executed on a large scale would infallibly break down. Then Kabu had wedge-shaped bricks moulded of the size of ordinary bricks; and placing them together dry, without the interposition of wetted clay, he demonstrated by experiment that these bricks would hold together of themselves.

"Zulul, the most obstinately prejudiced among the elders, demanded nothing short of Kabu's banishment, since he was contravening the laws of nature by sorceries. . . Thou seest that I know the story in its minutest details. . . Kabu was, in fact, obliged to quit the shores of the Tigris; but it seems that his ideas have made their way nevertheless . . . in spite of Zulul; and I congratulate you on the fact.

"Now, if thou wilt continue thy explanation of these marvels, we are attentive listeners."

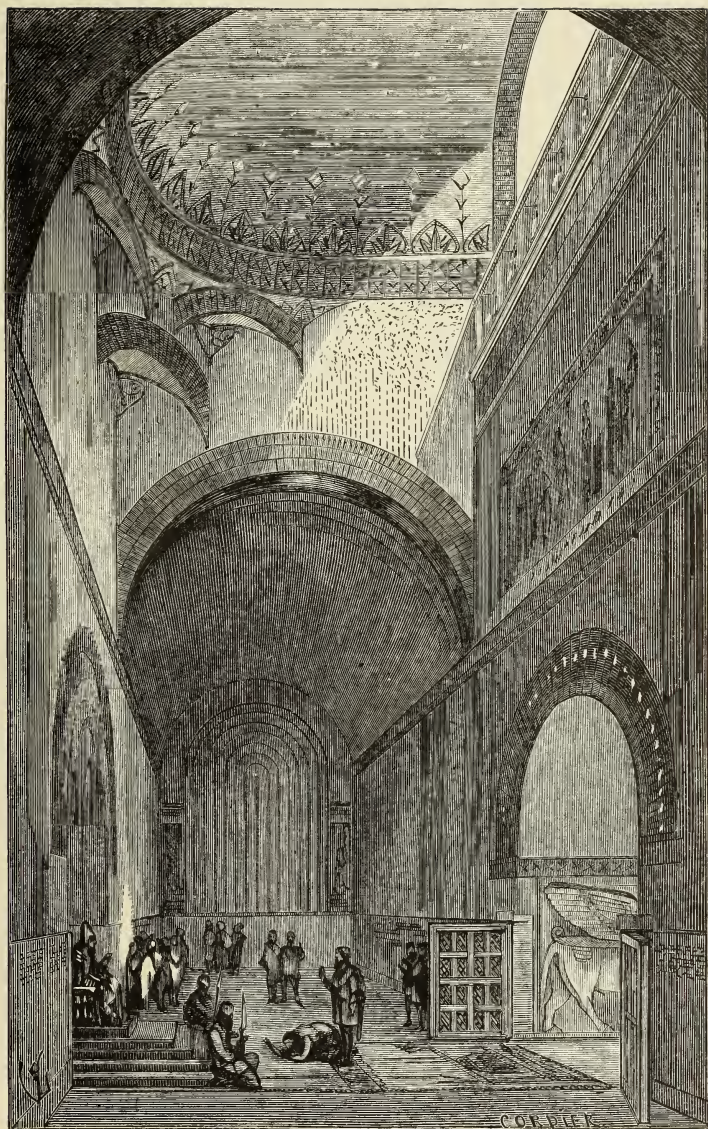
"When they began to make bricks specially adapted for the construction of arches, according to Kabu's suggestion,"

resumed the architect, "it was not difficult to burn them and glaze their faces, as they burn and glaze pottery. It is, then, with these baked and glazed bricks that we form the fronts of the archways which display their brilliant colours in the sunshine, the string-courses and tablets and the surbases of the halls, and even the pavement of rooms. But let us go in. This principal gate B,* whose jambs are ornamented with winged bulls cut in stone, gives admission to a first and a second vestibule, where the servants remain who accompany the persons summoned to the king's presence. Here is the greater court C, belonging to the suite of apartments specially reserved for the king—the seraglio. On the south side opens a hall, in front of which is a second long court, and a thick wall in which is a large doorway and a second smaller one. In this hall and court assemble the parties to causes submitted to the decision of the king. The litigants of high birth enter by the great door, the rest by the small one; but neither can be introduced into the hall D till they have given their names to the officer posted at the small door F. At the hour fixed for the trials, all cross the court, and betake themselves to the halls on the north, F and G. The king is seated on a throne placed at H, and the litigants, as they are successively called on, pass through the door I. You see how the second hall G is lighted. A demi-cupola, open to the sky, rests on the vault in the centre of the hall" (fig. 51.)

"This is certainly very beautiful," said Epergos; "what is thy opinion of it, Doxius? Confess that the old Zulul was quite in the wrong in wishing to prohibit this poor Kabu from constructing arches; for this is, in truth, a new and ingenious application of that first idea.

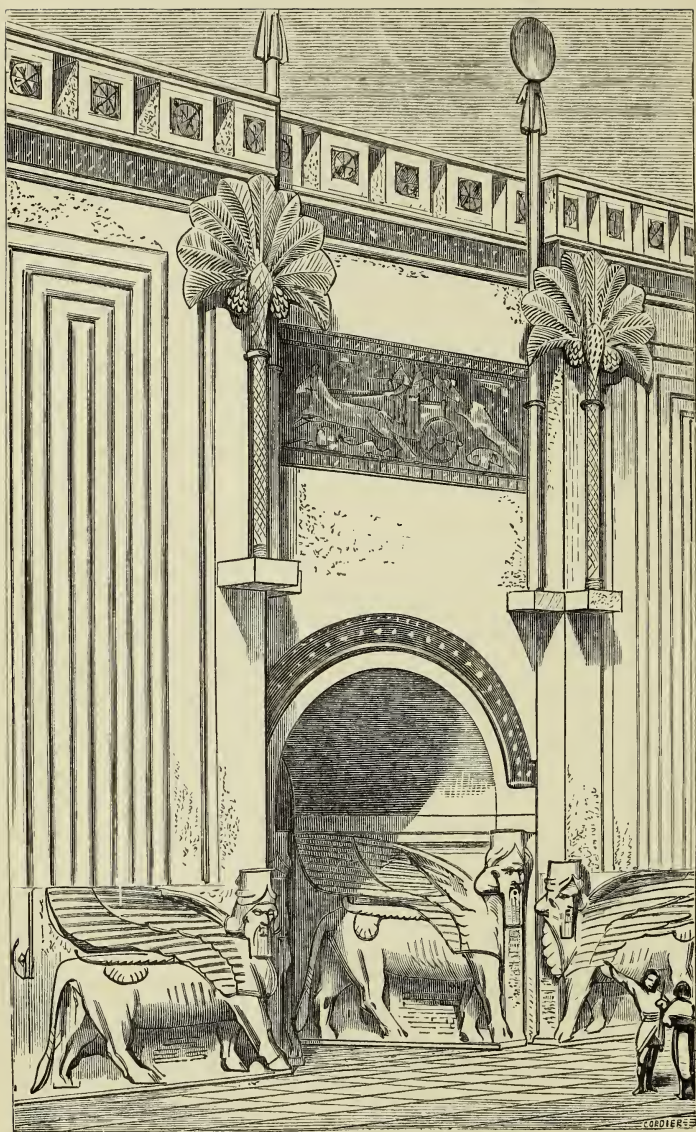
"In fact, since they were making arches, it was scarcely more difficult to make cupolas and demi-cupolas. But this

* See figure 47.



INTERIOR OF A HALL IN THE ASSYRIAN PALACE.—FIG. 51.

[To face page 146.]



ENTRANCE OF ONE OF THE BUILDINGS OF THE ASSYRIAN PALACE.—FIG. 52.

[To face page 147.

one is skilfully managed. Wert thou the first to adopt vaults of this kind?"

"Oh no!" replied the architect. "This kind of structure has long been in use, and they are still more easy to build than the arches. Here these demi-cupolas, opening on the terraces of the palace, have the advantage of pleasantly illuminating the interior of these halls, while they prevent the sun's rays from being too powerful. Besides, curtains are hung before these openings, and thus the light is subdued, and the air circulates freely. On this side," continued the architect, "there are no passages leading into the buildings on the northern side, and we shall have to go again into the great court."

"Permit me," said Epergos, "to contemplate this doorway of the first hall (fig. 52.)

"What is the meaning of these winged bulls with human faces, which form the piers of the entrance, and between whose legs long inscriptions are engraved?"

"The inscriptions record the labours of the king; as for the winged bulls, these representations belong to the class of sacred things, and it is forbidden to speak of them."

"Look above at those palm-trees of cedar-wood overlaid with gold plates, and which accompany that enamelled painting representing a royal chase, and those poles terminated by disks of gold.

"It is all wonderful; but I see that the walls are very frequently ornamented with large vertical cylinders like trunks of trees put close together."

"Yes, that is a tradition of the first constructions of our ancestors, which were made of trunks of trees placed together; and though we now build with bricks, we have preserved the souvenir of that primitive structure.

"In fact, I remember having seen in Media houses thus built."

"The two halls, K L,* arranged like those you have just seen, and which are assigned to the officers of the royal household, lead to the seraglio, which comprises three courts, M, N, O, and the king's apartments. You will observe that this quarter is entirely shut off, and only communicates with the north-eastern buildings by a single door *a*. These north-east buildings, which have two courts, P and R, are tenanted by the officers attached to the service of the prince, who have their private entrance at the gate S by the stairs *b* and the ascent for the chariots A'. This quarter is also isolated from the others."

"Now let us pass to the south-east angle."

"Observe that the only entrance from the outside is by the door *f*, and from the court of the seraglio by the door *g*. The provisions and the kitchens are in this quarter, which has also its court T. The provisions are arranged in the most orderly manner in the storehouses *t t u u u*. The servants convey the viands to the royal table, passing through the door *g*, and entering the large halls of the seraglio, where sometimes morning banquets are given to persons of distinction, or in the private apartments.

"All these halls are ceiled with semi-circular vaulting. But this is the most interesting part of the villa, and I am able to show it you as it is not yet occupied. It is the harem, on the north-west angle. The only entrance to this part of the building is by the door V, the little vestibule V', and the second vestibule V". Here at X is a long court, in which the eunuch guards reside. The harem properly so called has its court, on which open two small rooms *e e* for the women who have the care of the children, two large halls *h h* reserved for the children, who remain in the harem up to the age of five, two other halls *l l* in which the women pass their days, and the sacred apartments *m m*

* See figure 47.

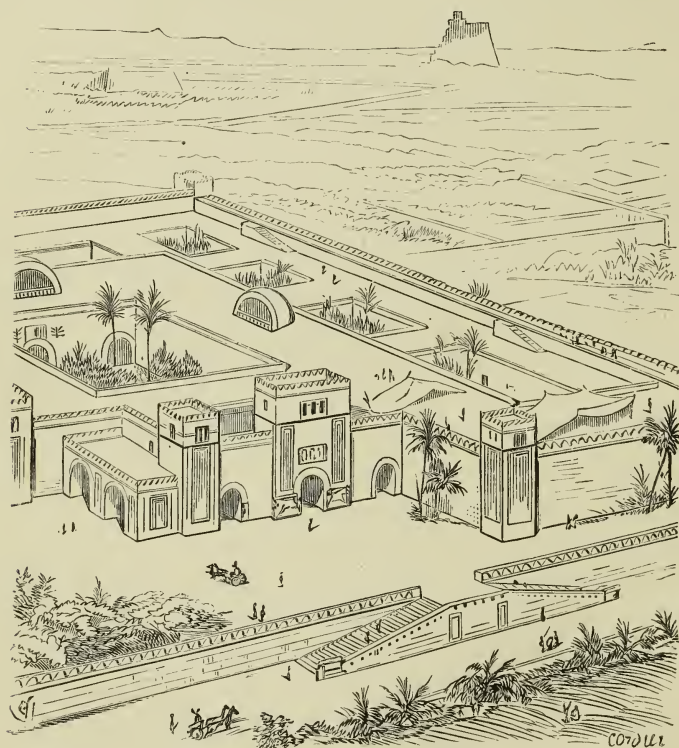
destined for the prince when he resides in his harem. The apartments are separated from the enclosure walls by isolating courts communicating with the lodgings of the eunuchs *p p p p p*.

“Let us go out and visit the observatory placed at the north-west angle of the platform at Z. This observatory is 120 feet high, and its base is a square of 70 feet. The ascent to the platform at the top is by inclined planes, whose aggregate length is 820 feet. This observatory, like all the rest, is built of unburnt bricks with a facing of stone at the base, some parts of glazed bricks. Each of the walls of the inclines forming a stage is painted in a different colour. The first is black, the second white, the third orange, the fourth blue, the fifth scarlet, the sixth is silvered, and the last gilded. See how it shines in the sun. Would you like to go to the top?”

“With pleasure,” said Epergos, and he began to climb the slopes at a brisk pace, while Doxius and the architect were ascending more slowly. Figure 53 presents a bird’s-eye view of a part of the palace, taken from the south-west angle.

The view from the higher platform of the observatory was charming. On the horizon to the south-east the city of the Ninevites could be discerned, already of considerable extent, and with lofty walls, whose centre was occupied by palaces. The Tigris—divided into several branches, from between which emerged islands covered with a rich vegetation, and with country houses exhibiting whitened walls and terraces—was bearing along on its rapid current numerous circular rafts supported by leathern bags filled with air, each navigated by some half dozen men who were thus bringing down provisions of all sorts to the city. Beyond the river, a chain of hills followed the course of its shores, their barren summits contrasting with the

expanse of dark verdure which covered the lower slopes. On the east extended an immense plain, streaked in every part by canals whose waters shone in the sun like silver plates, and from whose bosom might be seen rising at intervals artificial mounds surmounted by buildings—the mansions of influential personages surrounded by well-kept gardens. On the north, the winding course of the Tigris lost itself amid belts of 'blue hills which rose in succession towards an horizon of limpid clearness.



View of Assyrian Palace.—FIG. 53.

Epergos, supporting his chin on his hand, and leaning on the upper balustrade, seemed lost in contemplation.

"Well!" said the architect touching his arm; "is not this a fine situation for observing the heavens?"

"And the earth too," replied Epergos. "But tell me what is that large square enclosure which I see laid out there, in the plain, the side of which seems to me a furlong or thereabouts, and whose area is quite bare of vegetation?"

"It is the enclosure destined for the royal chase."

"What am I to understand by that?"

"At the present day, if the lion, formerly common in these plains, is to be hunted, you must go far northwards or westwards. The king cannot spare time for such distant expeditions. Servants, trained for the purpose, take large cages and contrive to entrap lions and lionesses in the mountains, without injuring them. These are conveyed to the royal domains; and when the sovereign wishes to indulge in the pastime of the chase, he surrounds this enclosure with soldiers, protected by large bucklers and armed with strong spears, and the cages are then wheeled into it. The king then mounts a chariot, with his charioteer at his side, and accompanied by two hunters selected by him. The cages are then opened; the soldiers utter loud shouts; the wild beasts, bewildered by the uproar, run in every direction; the king pursues them, and from his chariot transfixes them with arrows. Sometimes the beasts, infuriated by their wounds, throw themselves on the horses or on the wheels, then the two assistants, armed with lances, slay them."

"But this sport seems to me somewhat dangerous."

"All depends on the charioteer; if he is skilful, he can elude the attack of the beasts; and afford his master an opportunity for shooting them. The present king takes great delight in this sport, and is very skilful at it. He sometimes kills a dozen lions and lionesses in a single

evening. Accordingly, great favours are bestowed by the king upon a charioteer of experience and agility. But in the event of an accident,—if the chariot is arrested in its course by some furious lion fastening on the horse's flanks,—if the king is imperilled: oh, then, woe to the driver!"

"Why? what happens to him?"

"They nail him to a cross, or drive a stake into his breast, and so leave him to die."

"Are these tortures reserved for unskilful or unfortunate drivers?"

"By no means . . . Look there! a little to the right of this hunting-field. Do you see those stakes and crosses,—a great number of them?"

"Yes, certainly . . . and I fancy I see bodies too attached to these stakes."

"Yes; they are the bodies of eight hundred rebels from the northern provinces brought here before the king, for he alone can order their execution."

"And he has done so?"

"Certainly! Do you see also those flights of birds of prey hovering over the gibbets?" Epergos turned away. "Oh, those are only the most guilty!" continued the architect, "ten thousand have been kept as slaves, and are working at the canals, the walls, making bricks, and carrying materials. How could we get workmen to build these vast edifices, if we had not slaves in considerable numbers at our command? Especially as these works shorten the lives of many of them; for working in the mud during the hot season is unhealthy work. Since this palace was begun, we have lost more than two thousand workmen."

"But if a long peace deprived your sovereign of the means of furnishing his domains with a sufficient supply of slave labour, what would you do?"

"This has been the case sometimes; and then emissaries

are sent into the northern provinces, in the direction of Media, and beyond, whose mission it is to excite the population of these districts—which are never easy under the yoke—to revolt. Provoked by these agents, they refuse to pay the tributes, or intercept the messages, or massacre some of the royal delegates. The king sends an army, the country is pillaged, and the whole population carried away into slavery: in this way our building works are supplied with labour; and the crucifixion of a few, who are regarded as the most guilty, in presence of the assembled slaves, renders those who are spared submissive and docile as girls, and they work without murmuring.”

“These are expensive palaces,” whispered Epergos to Doxius; and addressing the architect, he said: “But the fear of torture does not make sculptors and painters.”

“Oh, as to fine work of that kind, it is different! We have corporations of sculptors and painters subjected to severe rules; these artisans are instructed in schools taught by masters under sacerdotal direction; for nothing must be done which is not in accordance with religion. These men are free, and live together in quarters assigned them; and what they gain goes into the fund of the corporation, which is charged with the maintenance of each of its members.”

Just then a person presented himself on the platform, and said something to the architect.

“I must go down,” said the latter to the visitors; “a message has been brought me from the court; but you need not hurry. Here,” said he, presenting them with a small plate of lead on which certain characters were marked, “this will enable you to inspect the palace without me; we shall meet again after sunset.”

Epergos and Doxius remained on the platform a few moments longer.

The shadows were lengthening in the plain, and appeared like sheets of lapis lazuli gradually outspread upon a carpet of gold. The river assumed leaden hues, while the habitations sparkled like topazes amid verdure purple-tinted by the slanting rays of the sun. The whole region of the west seemed aflame; and on the horizon, through the glowing atmosphere, long ruddy streaks were visible. From afar were heard the songs of workmen and rustics. Tinted by the last rays of the setting sun, and the reflections of the sky, the terraces of the palace were beginning to assume lilac hues; and its courts seemed so many wide basins buried in shade, whence emerged the tops of date-trees flecked with gold.

Epergos, contrary to his habit, did not appear disposed to break the silence; and Doxius looked askance at him from time to time with a sinister smile.

"Well," said the latter, when they began to descend the inclines of the observatory, "what dost thou say of this paragon of civilisations? Art thou not proud of the progress which the human race, aided by thy precious influence, is making; and especially that part of it which has the good fortune to engage thy sympathies? Is it not erecting splendid palaces, and diverting the course of rivers to irrigate its fair fields? Does it not transact all its affairs with the most admirable regularity? Is it not as economical as it is profusely liberal? Why, then, this look of dissatisfaction? Does such a success still fall short of thy desires?"

"Doxius, I know thy malice of old; now hold thy peace."

"Why should I? Am I not, like thyself, struck with wonder at the splendours of this abode, which thou hast so strongly urged me to visit? It is somewhat costly, as thou sayest: provinces must be pillaged, and their inha-

bitants reduced to slavery *en masse*, after some hundreds of them have been hanged or empaled, to secure this industrial progress; thousands of men must labour for the satisfaction of one; and if they are insufficient, it is reasonable to set to work to provoke poor brutes to rebel against this civilisation with a view to get a pretext for making them co-operate in its development. In fact, I think it very ingenious, for——”

“A truce, Doxius, to thy sarcasms; say no more!”

“Positively, I cannot understand thee. Hast thou not lent thine aid to these men who produce such admirable things; hast thou not sought for and followed them wherever it has pleased them to disperse themselves? Wert thou not just now expatiating on their aptitudes—on the advantages of some supposed mixtures of races adapted to favour certain developments? These men think themselves superior to others; and in fact they are so in point of courage, industry, and love of order; and they assert their superiority, considering other men mere cattle. Is this true?”

“Yes, it is true.”

“Dost thou approve of their manner of treating other people?”

“No.”

“Well, then, to what purpose, in the general order of things, is this prodigious development of civilisation,—this improvement of the appliances of life,—if some few only reap the advantage, to the detriment of the mass?”

“Hearken, Doxius! I neither wish, nor am I able to answer thee to-day. I do not know. . . I admit that there is something monstrous in all this—something truly shocking in this frightful consumption of materials and of men. Yet what a grand race! . . . what power and energy!—Consider what they have done! . . . What

progress! . . . these vast constructions . . . these vaultings." . . .

"Oh, excellent! Vaulting is an admirable invention, doubtless! but do not deny that my presentiment was well founded when I opposed the adoption of this fancy, once so warmly applauded by thee. Thou seest what they cost, these vaultings of thine! They require heaps of human corpses for their foundations."

Thus disputing, the companions had re-entered the great court of the palace. A few remaining warm tints still faintly gilded the higher parts of the buildings; all the rest was buried in a blue shade, and the sky was already glittering with stars. The strange sculptures which adorned the portals of the Throne Hall; those winged bulls which seemed to be issuing from below the sombre vault, and whose human heads were still illumined by the twilight, irresistibly attracted the attention of the visitors. They experienced, in presence of these mysterious figures, a vague sensation of dread. Epergos, buried in thought, appeared himself a statue fixed in front of these colossi.

"Art thou expecting the winged bulls of the palace to speak to thee?" said Doxius, slapping him on the shoulder.

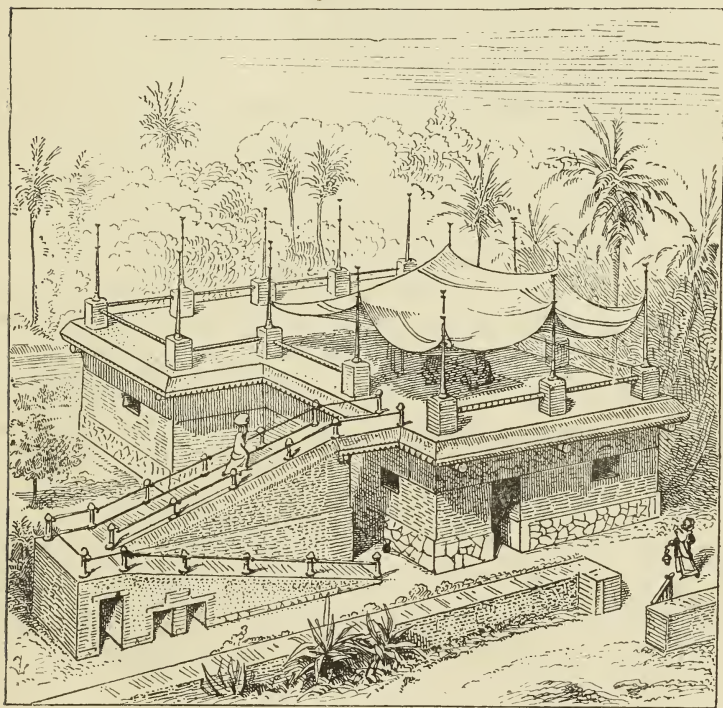
"They do, in fact, speak to me," replied Epergos.

"And what do they say to thee?"

"Thou shalt know another time: but let us depart."

For several days, Epergos and Doxius were engaged in travelling along the shores of the Tigris. Everywhere they saw well-cultivated, because well-irrigated fields. The roads exhibited the most perfect order; and along them might be seen vehicles continually passing, or herds of cattle quietly moving. Numerous canals served the purpose of irrigation, and were also in constant use for navigation; this means of transport being the least laborious in that country, where for a great part of the year the heat is most

oppressive. The houses scattered over the country were all built on nearly the same model. The better class had vaulted roofs; the less pretentious were covered in with palm-trunks and canes, upon which earth, beaten and plastered, formed terraces where awnings were stretched out to form sleeping places by night, and for shade in the daytime. These terraces were reached by inclines of unburnt brick.



Assyrian House.—FIG. 54.

Figure 54 represents one of these habitations. The basements are generally made of stones (irregularly laid), to withstand the floods which sometimes inundate the plain. On these are erected walls of unburnt bricks, with lintels of wood over the doors and windows. Then large tree-trunks

are laid across, on the tops of the walls, and others smaller, the contrary way ; next canes and clay, well-kneaded and covered with lime plaster ; for the Ninevites have the art of converting certain lime stones into lime by burning ; and mixing this lime with fine river sand, they make very fine and excellent plaster. They also procure bitumen in the mountains to the west, which they use as a cement between the baked bricks, under pavements, and also upon the terraces. This bitumen is of great service to them, and they use it largely.

When the heat is so intense as to become stifling even in the interiors of the dwellings, the well-to-do inhabitants have tents of thick white woollen stuffs placed on the terraces, and servants are kept continually watering these tents outside. Thus the sun, by causing this water to evaporate, rapidly produces an agreeable coolness beneath the tents.

"It is evident," said Doxius, "that in these countries the enjoyment of life depends on being born among the dominant and wealthy part of the community. Never have I seen a people among whom the condition of the poorer classes was more pitiable."

"Must we not except Egypt?" replied Epergos.

"No, indeed : in Egypt there is a settled order of things ; the several classes have their privileges, their rights, and their obligations ; they are separated by strict rules ; but the meanest of these classes is treated paternally, if we compare the treatment they receive with that which all here have to undergo, who are not of noble race, or favoured by the great or by the king."

"Yes, I agree with thee that the condition of this people is miserable ; that the dominant class is tyrannical, harsh, and unfeeling ;—that it shamefully abuses its power. But observe, Doxius, a great work is going on here. This is a vast laboratory, where the civilisations of the future are

being prepared ; thy friends the Egyptians may be superior to these Assyrians with their large eyes, thick eyebrows, bushy beards, stout limbs, and wide shoulders ; but Progress takes no account of the former, because they have never been in contact with the world, except incidentally ; they are fixed, and will remain fixed, on the banks of the Nile. It is quite otherwise with the inhabitants of these countries ; they swallow up other peoples, and perhaps will be swallowed up in their turn ; but they will have taught many things to mankind. Thou wert asking me what the colossi of the king's palace were saying to me the other evening. They said : We represent the patient, persistent work, the material strength and power which we carry everywhere, for we have wings ; our labour is intelligent, and will not be unprofitable nor devoid of glory, for we have a human head ! To thee,—who darest every step in advance, who maintainest that every attempt, every experiment, every effort, even, leads to perdition,—the Egyptians appear to be the perfection of humanity.”

“ Yes, certainly,” interrupted Doxius.

“ Well ; thy friends the Egyptians will remain for ever a people shut in, an exceptional race : it is not among them that the great glory of humanity, which I am expecting and hoping for, will have its birth ; whereas from this people—despite its abuse of power, despite its corruption and its contempt for everything outside the pale of the superior caste—may issue a fertilising spring of life.”

“ Ah ! I see, off again ! Vaultings,—gimcracks, discoveries, as thou callest them ! then humanity enters on a course of glorious destinies ! Well, if thou predictest to me eternal immutability on the banks of the Nile, I predict to thee unproductive activity, ruins, and disasters, without end or intermission, on these Assyrian plains.”

“ Perhaps thou speakest truth ; but the rest of the world

will live ; for to live is to be in action, and that Egypt of thine will dry up like a lake that is no longer fed."

"Egypt is born to endure for ever ; for it has the wisdom inherent in eternal things, which are unchangeable."

"Nothing is unchangeable, everything is subject to change of form."

"That which changes dies."

"The contrary is the real truth ; for life is only a succession of transformations."



CHAPTER XV.

THE PELASGI.

THE stream from the east had continued to spread emigrants through Media; but, dammed up, so to speak, by the numerous populations settled in that country, it could no longer spread southwards; and while leaving small settlements of pure Aryan race on the banks of the Araxes, and as far as the southern slopes of the Caucasus, it spread farther and farther along the shores of the Euxine, occupied the fertile countries which later on took the name of Armenia, Paphlagonia, and Bithynia, crossed the Bosphorus, and founded colonies in Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly. The isles of the Ægean sea were peopled by them, as also the Peloponnesus.

These settlements had already long existed at the time when Epergos and Doxius were visiting the palace of the Ninevite king.

On the other hand, the Aryan peoples, mingled with those of the Semitic race, had spread along a line parallel to the north of the Taurus chain, and were occupying Phrygia, Caria, Lycia, Rhodes and Crete, or at least the countries thus designated at a later period. Nomadic or rather migratory in their habits, they continued for a long time without fixed settlements; they did not live in waggons like the Scythians, but dwelt temporarily in huts built amid the forests which covered all these countries; and possessed herds of cattle and swine, and flocks of sheep and geese. They already cultivated the ground in the plains

but in a primitive way, and it was not till later on that they sowed seed in ground prepared by the plough. The habitations of these Pelasgi¹ consisted of a low circular wall, formed of large stones, on which was erected a cone of branches of trees covered with reeds or twigs (fig. 55). The fire was made in the middle, and the smoke issued



House of Pelasgian Peasant.—FIG. 55.

from the top of the cone. A circular enclosure, likewise constructed of large stones, surrounded each of these huts.

Having lived among the mountains ever since they

¹ "Pelasgian" signifies old, ancient.

quitted the plateaus of the Indus, and having formed but a slight acquaintance with the already highly civilised peoples settled in the south of Media, they had preserved their rude and simple character. Like their ancestors, they had vehicles drawn by oxen or horses, lived together in tribes, and preserved the religious beliefs of the Aryas, slightly modified during their migrations.

When they settled on the west of the *Ægean* sea, the Pelasgi found in these regions barbarian aborigines, who lived on acorns and milk-food. Always on horseback, these first inhabitants drove their great herds of cattle before them with long pointed sticks.

Given to pillage, difficult to capture, and inhabiting only caves or forest jungles, they obliged the new comers for many years to defend themselves against their aggressions ; and these struggles left such an indelible remembrance in the minds of the Pelasgi, that they continued to portray on their public monuments those primitive contests with these beings — half-horse, half-man — who had disputed the soil with them.

The Pelasgian tribes prospered, however ; they cultivated wheat and the vine, extracted oil from the olive, and devoted themselves to agricultural pursuits. Those inhabiting the coast and the islands had built vessels, were engaged in commerce, and practised piracy. Relations were thus established between the populations of the opposite shores of the *Ægean* ;—relations which were not always pacific, but which none the less tended, in many cases, to bring about the fusion of the two peoples.

Most of the inhabitants of the Asiatic coast were more nearly akin to the Semitic than the Aryan race ; they already possessed arts comparatively advanced ; worked metals ; and were skilful in the art of building large vessels and towns. The Pelasgi of Thessaly and those of the

shores of the Peloponnesus, were obliged to concert measures for resisting the incursions of the peoples settled on the Asiatic coast. The tribes formed federations, and the most powerful among them, or those whose chiefs were most intelligent, soon acquired a marked preponderance.

In imitation of the piratical tribes who ravaged their coasts, they built towns and citadels.

The countries inhabited by the Northern Pelasgi, intersected by high steep hills and ravines, were peculiarly rich in various kinds of stone suitable for erecting durable buildings. Accordingly, the Pelasgi did not fail to make abundant use of these materials, avoiding tedious workmanship, however; for they still had only bronze tools, and were therefore unable to give shapes of delicacy to these materials. As for traditions of art, they had none; and the little instruction they had been able to gather was limited to faint recollections derived from the Medes of the north during their sojourn south of the Caucasus, and from the articles they received from the Carians and Lycians in exchange for the products of their soil.

These Pelasgian villages, however, despite the extreme simplicity of their buildings, preserved a character of strength and rude grandeur, in perfect accordance with the unpolished manners and primitive habits of the people.

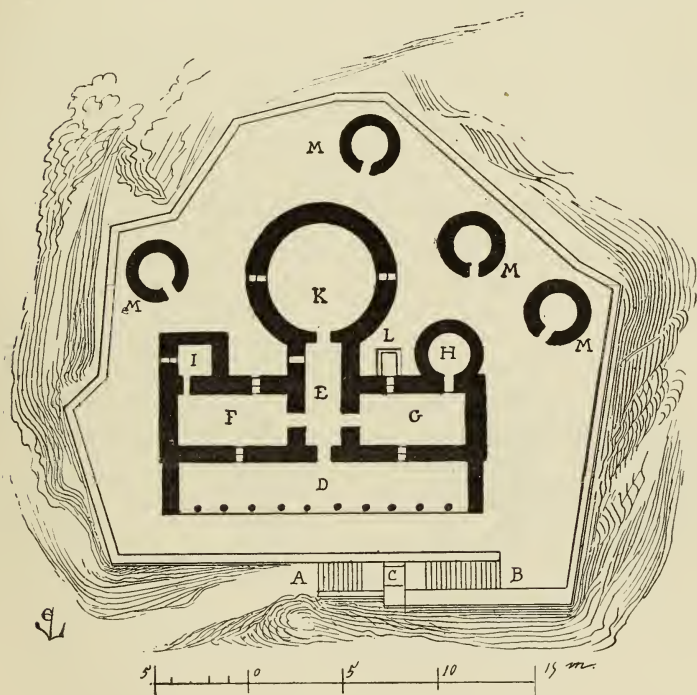
Taking advantage of naturally defended positions, such as promontories and acclivities, they surrounded these positions with thick walls built of large unsquared blocks of stone, irregularly laid according to the method of the Tyrrhenians; thus was formed the citadel, which enclosed the treasure-house, one or more temples, and the habitations of the chiefs of the tribes.

Around this citadel were grouped the dwellings, which were themselves surrounded by an enclosure. The leading men among them who had not residences in the citadel,

built their houses upon some commanding point of difficult access.

As the huts of the shepherd and the tiller of the ground were circular, so the dwelling of the rich preserved this time-hallowed form, at least in one of its parts ; for at that time even the temples were built on a circular plan. But the dwellings of the rich were built almost entirely of stone,—occasionally with a wooden portico.

Figure 56 gives the plan of one of the most spacious



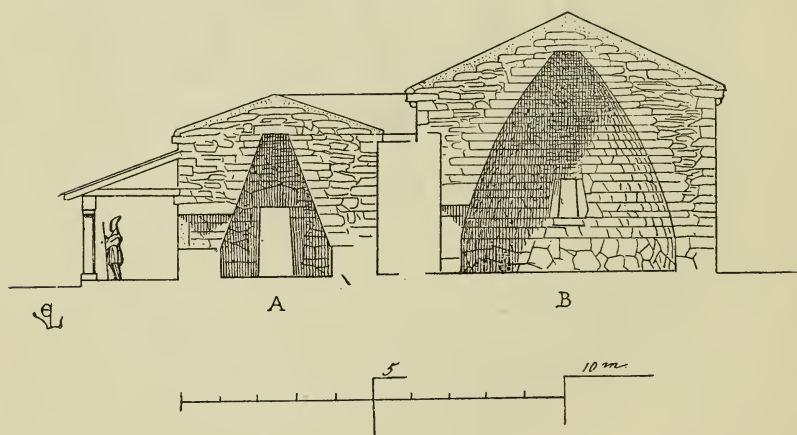
Plan of House of a Pelasgian noble.—FIG. 56.

and costly of their houses. Built on the summit of a rocky eminence, it is surrounded by a wall which crowns this levelled summit, following all its natural sinuosities. A

flight of steps AB gives access to the platform ; but at C a gate shuts off the steps about the middle of the ascent. At D is a portico formed of trunks of trees roughly fashioned, supporting a longitudinal beam, on which rest the joists and the roof. A single door gives entrance to the vestibule E, which opens on the right into an apartment G, where the servants and strangers remain—with a kitchen of circular form at H ; and on the left to a similar apartment F, which is occupied by the master ; and a small chamber I, which is the family treasury.

From the vestibule there is a direct entrance into the circular room K. This is the place for social gatherings, and where meals in common are taken. At L is a cistern collecting and preserving the rain-water. At M are huts for the servants.

The following is the method according to which the Pelasgi construct their dwellings:—



Section of House of a Pelasgian noble.—FIG. 57.

A, figure 57, gives the transverse section of the room G and of the portico : B, the section of the circular hall K.

As the entire edifice is built with large stones, these are

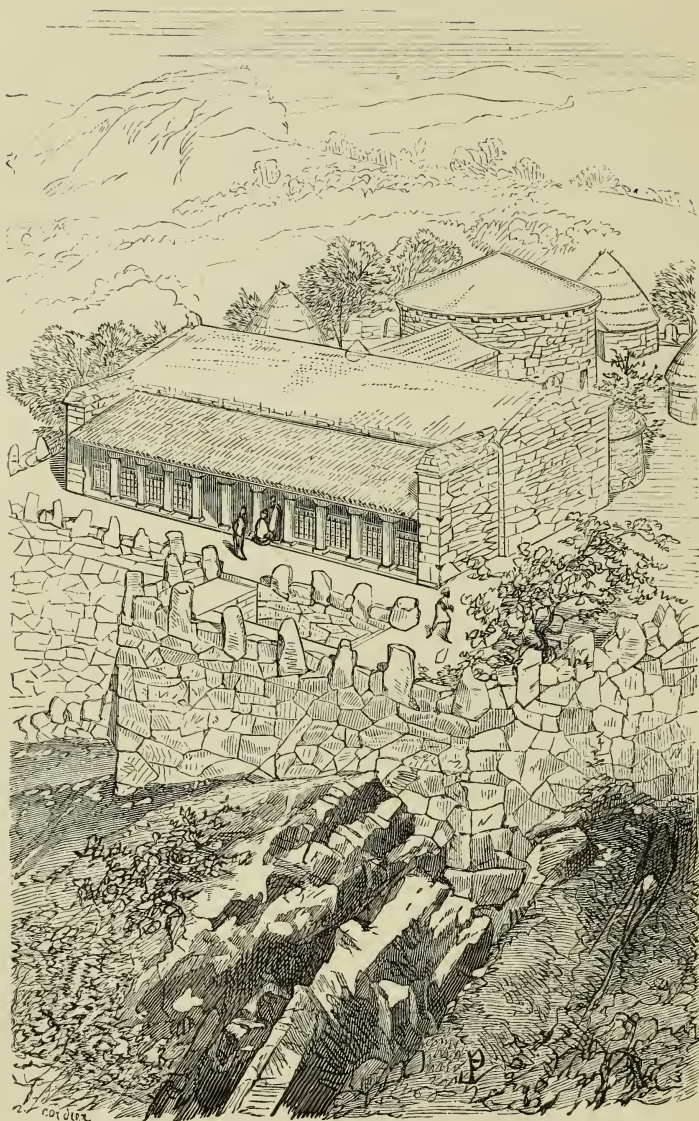
lifted to their place by main strength, with the help of inclines formed of stones and earth, which are taken away when all is finished.

It is, however, for the erection of the basement chiefly that materials of great size are used ; when the workmen reach the corbelled-out sloping walls they use lighter stones, and select flat ones. When the structure is complete—care being taken that every stone exactly covers the joints of those beneath—the upper part is plastered over with clay mixed with straw, so as to cover all the stones that present slopes on the exterior.

The Pelasgi assert that these buildings were so designed by their ancestors ; but it is certain that they derived their ideas from what they saw on the shores of Asia—in Caria and Lycia ; though in these countries there were two modes of building—one entirely with stone, which seems to belong to the Tyrrhenians, and which much resembles what is shown here ; the other with timber, which belongs more particularly to Aryan traditions inherited by the Ionians.

There are, moreover, different versions of the history of the migrations of the peoples to whom the name of Ionians is given, but whose Aryan origin cannot be doubted, though they may have been mixed with Semitic populations at a very early period. We must suppose these Ionians to have passed from Asia into Europe—*i.e.*, the Peloponnesus, and to have been driven out by the Achæans ; some would have returned to Asia where they founded colonies ; others would have sought refuge on the coast of Elis and in the Archipelago which preserves their name.

But to return to the Pelasgian habitation of which the plan has been given. Figure 58 presents it in perspective, with its escarped enclosure crowned with large, rough stones which form so many merlons, and the openings between them crenelations for defence. On the platform are a few



View of House of a Pelasgian noble.—FIG. 58.

fig and olive-trees, round the huts set apart for the servants. The portico, constructed of wood and covered with reeds and straw, is the place occupied by the family during the day. The space between the posts is partly closed with wattling. As stated above, these Pelasgi live in tribes more or less powerful, but which tend more and more to unite in federations. Their occupations are divided between the cultivation of the soil, cattle-breeding, and piracy.

They remained, however, in a state of simplicity which contrasted with the progress made by the Ionian populations of Asia. These, being in permanent connection with nations already highly advanced in the arts, were building sumptuous edifices, in which, as we shall presently see, the original traditions and influences of the bordering countries may be said to have been reflected.

CHAPTER XVI.

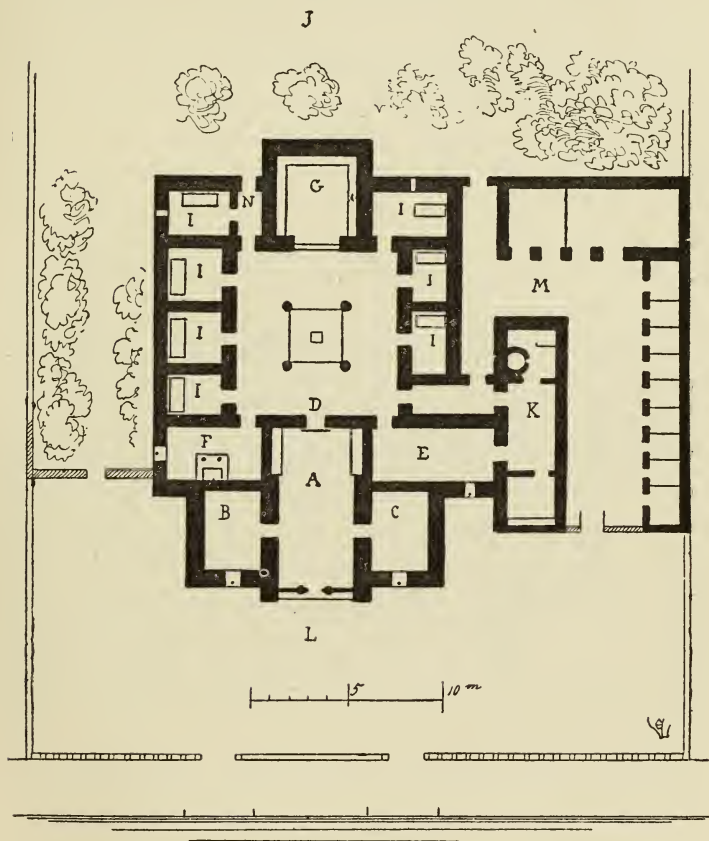
THE IONIANS OF ASIA, THE CARIANS AND LYCIANS.

THE countries inhabited by the people known as Ionians, on the western shores of Asia opposite the Peloponnesus, were rich and fertile, their mountain slopes at that time being covered with forests. Wood and stones suitable for building were in abundance. We find ourselves in a far different scene from that of the great alluvial plains of Assyria ; we behold a country broken up by mountains and furrowed by water-courses, and whose deeply indented shores presented bays and gulfs peculiarly suited for the concealment of piratical vessels. The island of Rhodes, on the south, was the first of a series of isles which opposed a kind of dyke, cut by passes, to the expeditions of invaders from the west.

Most of these islands, commencing with the largest,—Rhodes,—were occupied by Ionian colonies. A geographical position so favourable to agriculture, commerce, and even piracy, with a fine climate, had afforded the Ionians an opportunity of rapidly developing their natural endowments ; they were therefore becoming wealthy and powerful.

As Epergos had correctly presaged, the mingling of the two races—Aryan and Semitic—was rapidly producing an exceptionally energetic development of the arts ; and where the Aryan branch was relatively vigorous, the arts, instead of resting stationary as in Egypt, and even in the lands of Assyria, were in a state of continual progress and transformation. Now these Ionians had preserved the timber-

framed construction of Aryan traditions, and had adopted from the Tyrrhenian Semites the method of building with blocks of stone. In employing these two methods simultaneously, however, they did not mix them; in fact, they only placed them, as it were, in juxtaposition. From this



Plan of Ionian House.—FIG. 59.

procedure there resulted a very singular and incongruous style of art, but whose consequences had a value the importance of which we shall soon be able to appreciate.

In the plans of their habitations, also, the Ionians exhibited the results of Aryan traditions combined with Semitic influences.

This is shown in figure 59. Here the dwelling is divided into two distinct parts; the one devoted to relations with the external world, and the other to that interior life which is concealed from view. At A is a kind of entrance-hall relatively large, opening immediately from without, and intended for the reception of persons calling on business.

This hall communicates right and left with two rooms B, C; one intended for the business of the proprietor,—for every Ionian devotes himself to trade of some kind;—the other for the lodging of the employés—servants or slaves who have to do with people out-of-doors. The hall A communicates with the interior court only by a single door D, which is not passed by strangers to the family, unless admitted by the master.

This door D opens into a court surrounded by porticos supported by four columns. At E is the room intended for provisions of every kind, and which is entered only from the portico; at F the room in which the archives are deposited, and where stands the altar of the gods. At G is the place where the family assemble, as in the Semitic habitation.¹ It is in this hall, widely open to the portico, that the meals are taken; and here the women and children pass the day.

From the two sides of the portico at I, open the bed-chambers. At K we have the kitchen with its offices, directly communicating with the portico and the court M.

This habitation is situated on the side of a hill, and in front is a platform L, with a low enclosure. At M are the servants' quarters and cattle sheds, with a special court opening on the platform, and the gardens J, to which the

¹ See figs. 45, 46.

inhabitants of the house have immediate access by the passage N.

Figure 60 gives a view of the front of this habitation, whose walls are built of stone irregularly shaped or laid, but close-jointed, without mortar, and whose window-openings, doorways, roofs, porticos, and ceilings are of wood, and the roof-covering of tiles.



Exterior view of Ionian House.—FIG. 60.

All the parts of the building made of wood are painted in lively colours, among which yellow, red and white predominate. In the sunshine these colours lose their crudeness, and harmonise in the most agreeable manner.

“Here,” said Epergos to his companion, as they were passing in front of this dwelling, which belonged to a wealthy

merchant, "is a beautiful residence, which in no way resembles what we saw on former occasions among the yellow race, on the Upper Indus, in Media, Assyria, or in Egypt. It is worth our while to examine this structure in detail; is it not?"

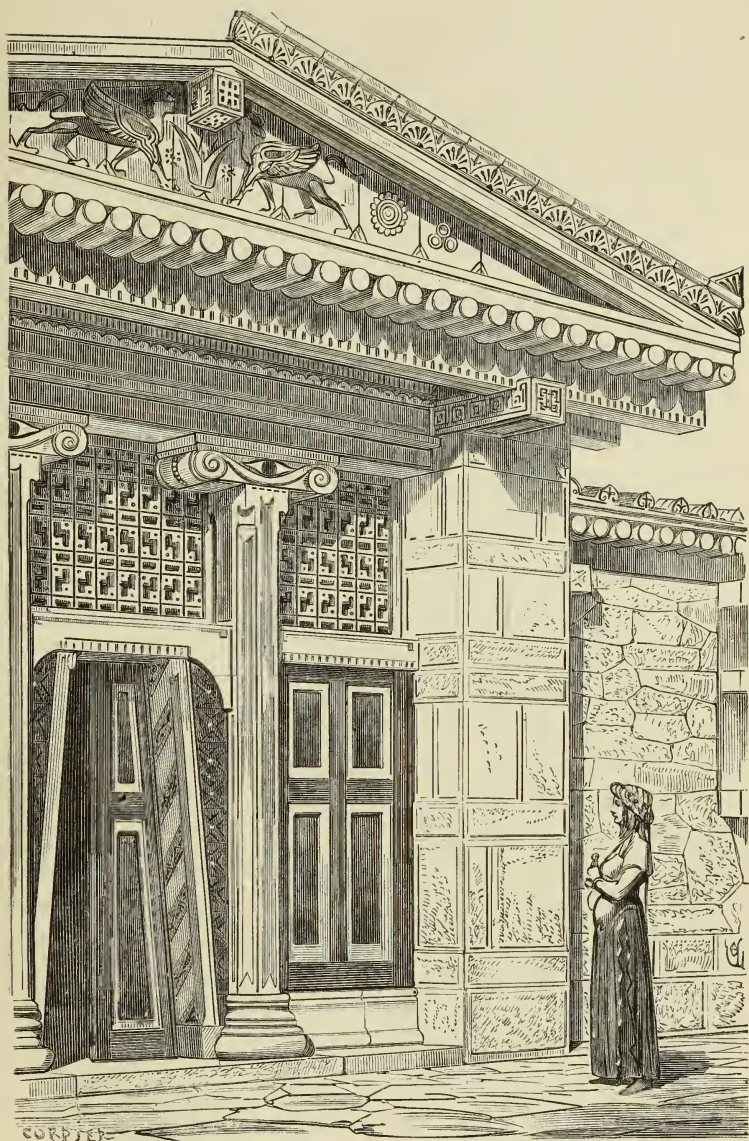
"If you want my candid opinion, this building seems to me not a little incongruous."

"Let us not be in a hurry to judge before we have examined it particularly."

"The houses of my Egyptian friends appear to me in every respect the most sensible. Why this profusion of detail on the outside? Are houses built for those who live in them, or for the passers by? In all this there is an attempt at display which makes me suppose these people more vain than wise."

"We shall see: but thou wilt perceive that the entrance only of the habitation is specially decorated; the rest exhibits great simplicity. Perhaps there is a reason for the particularly rich appearance of this entrance. Dost thou remember the dwellings of the Aryas of the Upper Indus, which all possessed a spacious hall intended for assemblies? Might not this be a tradition of those customs?"

Thus discoursing, the companions were approaching the central point of the front (fig. 61). "See now," continued Epergos, "how that timber-work is set in between the ends of the two stone walls; how considerably that roof projects beyond the front, so as to shelter the entrance well, and how ingeniously this projection is supported by beams which bear on the ends of the walls. And these two posts with their sculptured and painted caps, their lateral wooden partitions and upper trellis-work, do they not seem well contrived? I recognise here those round wooden joists which we formerly met with in the buildings of the Aryas of the Indus and among the Medes. But everywhere else



Entrance of Ionian House.—FIG. 61.

the timbers are carefully squared and covered with a thin coating admirably coloured. Then, again, see how well those ends of the walls are built, with low, wide stones interposed between pieces placed on end. These men seem to me to know what they are about, and to do nothing without good reason."

"We had, indeed, the opportunity while passing along their coasts, of seeing that they do not neglect their own interests, are proficient in piracy, and can drive sharp bargains when they are not engaged in plundering their neighbours. Oh, they are clever enough ! It is not surprising that with the profits they make, and the plunder they get, they should build sumptuous dwellings."

At this moment the owner of the house was just returning home, accompanied by several servants. He was a young man ; his face, framed in a short black beard carefully cleared around the mouth, had an expression at once genial and sensual. The nose, narrow and of good profile, followed the line of the forehead : and his eyes, slightly turned up at the outer extremities, were surmounted by delicate eyebrows regularly arched, as if they had been drawn with a pencil. His hair of ebony black, silky, abundant, and parted on his forehead, fell behind his shoulders. A white, pointed cap, slightly curved back in front and embroidered all over with gold thread, left the ears visible. A tunic fitting tight round the waist, with short sleeves, quite covered with embroidered figures, left the neck bare ; while over his broad shoulders was thrown a kind of scarf. His legs were covered with leggings of fine white stuff plaited in little folds, and his feet enclosed in shoes of bright red, laced, and with pointed toes slightly turned up. As he passed, he gave a side-look at the companions, and said something in an undertone to one of his servants. The latter approached Epergos and Doxius, and asked them if

they were foreigners, and whether they had any communication to make to the proprietor of the dwelling. Epergos having replied in the affirmative, the servant admitted them into the entrance hall.

This hall was wainscoted throughout, and covered with a panelled ceiling richly painted. Penetrating through the lattice-work of the entrance, a subdued and tranquil light diffused itself in the interior. Mats were spread around on a very low, wide bench; and the pavement, entirely composed of small polished stones of divers shades, reflected the vivid colouring of the wainscot.

Epergos and Doxius had not been in the hall many minutes, when the master of the house joined them. "What news do you bring?" said he. "We have seen the eastern countries, and the high lands peopled by savage tribes who have no intercourse with the other nations. We have traversed Media, which is impatient under the yoke of the Assyrians. To the north of Media, along the Caspian sea, tribes are continually passing on their way westwards, to form settlements as far as the Euxine. These men are vigorous and poor, daring and intrepid; and they burn with the desire of occupying the fertile domains of the prosperous Ninevites. They are following the line of the Anti-Taurus mountains, and are descending into the plains to the west of that chain. . ."

"Well! how does that concern me, I pray?"

"It does so, inasmuch as this stream, ever flowing westward along the same course, will ultimately reach the coasts which you inhabit."

"Have we not towns in strong positions and well fortified, to which we can retreat, and whence we shall be able to descend and crush them?"

"You have what is still better—superior weapons, war chariots, and the science of warfare; but you are wealthy

and prosperous, and these barbarians covet possessions which they have not. As long as they inhabit their mountains, with no means of subsistence but the products of the chase, and have not come into contact with nations accustomed to the luxuries of a refined existence, they remain tranquil; but the moment they get a glimpse of the benefits which accompany civilisation, they spread like torrents, overthrowing everything in their course, and fearing neither privations nor death. Leaving nothing behind them, and having nothing to lose, they are seen rushing in numerous and half-starved hordes upon the fertile plains; eager to defend the possessions they have conquered, when they have once set foot upon a territory that pleases them, they never quit it again."

"Are they still far from us?"

"Certainly! And many years will elapse before they reach so far as your prosperous countries, for they have enough to occupy them for a long while."

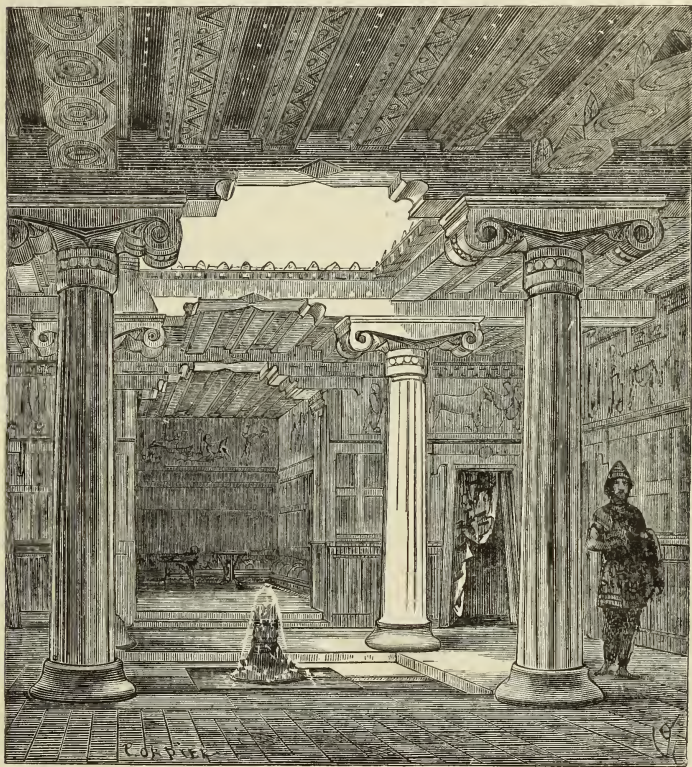
"If that is the case, we need not be uneasy."

And having sent for wine and cakes, the master invited the guests to take some refreshments, and then said: "Are you not traders? are you not come to this country to buy and sell?"

"No," replied Epergos; "our object is to become acquainted with the nations; to make inquiries respecting their occupations and arts; that is why we stopped in front of your dwelling, which appeared more beautiful and better arranged than any other."

"It was I who had it built, my father having bequeathed me great wealth. He lived in a small wooden house,—a very old one, but which he was unwilling to quit. Now-a-days we have Tyrrhenian workmen, very skilful in working stone, and who hire their labour to people rich enough to employ them; we therefore make use, as you see, of stones

to raise the walls, and so enclose the wooden buildings to which we are accustomed, in a massive stone structure, as a protection from heat and stormy weather. If you like to visit the other parts of the house, since you are curious about our arts, there is nothing to prevent you from seeing the apartments which I think proper to show to persons of



Interior of Ionian House.—FIG. 62.

discretion, and you shall be shown through them. But tell me, have you heard any news of the fleet of galleys which we sent into the western seas ? ”

“ None ; for we do not come from that quarter.”

“Bad news has been brought to the country by some fishermen ; but nothing certain.”

The proprietor having bidden a slave to go and acquaint the women of the presence of strangers, Epergos and Doxius were admitted into the court surrounded by a portico (fig. 62).

In the middle of the area left open to the sky was a small fountain, whose waters poured into a basin, and into channels which conveyed them by conduits into the garden. The portico, constructed entirely of wood, was painted, like the front, in vivid colours. The rain-water, discharged from the roofs, fell into the middle of the court. Opening into the court at the further end was the room where the family assembled,—raised two steps above the pavement of the portico. Around this room were seats, very low and wide, covered with rich stuffs. It was on these seats that persons reclined to take their meals, which were served on small tables placed before each guest. Above these seats of wood inlaid with ivory and silver, was a wainscot, also covered with inlays very beautifully executed. This room was lighted only by the open part of the court ; and this reflected light gave a brilliancy to the vivid colours of the ceiling, the walls, and the wainscoting. Epergos asked the proprietor many questions, to which he replied apathetically, and without appearing much flattered by the admiration expressed by his guest.

“I see,” he said at last, “that you take a lively interest in these matters of art ; I will send for Eudexion, who will reply to all your questions better than I could ; when you are weary of interrogating him, you shall come and see the gardens.” On this he beckoned to a slave, and told him to go immediately in search of the architect ; then with a friendly gesture to the visitors, he went in the direction of the gardens.

Left alone with Doxius, Epergos said : "Dost thou remember the habitation of old Vâmadêva,¹ which we visited many centuries ago?"

"Why this question?"

"Because I find a certain relationship between this building and those houses of the ancient Aryas."

"A merely fortuitous resemblance."

"By no means : there is nothing fortuitous in this world ; everything has a cause. The house of the old Vâmadêva had, like this, its large anterior hall, its court with surrounding shelter, its place set apart for the altar of the gods and valuable treasures, and its bedrooms round the portico."

"We have seen halls and porticos everywhere — and sleeping rooms everywhere."

"Certainly : but what we saw in Egypt and in Assyria had no resemblance with what we see here. This timber framing, these wooden posts, the arrangement of these joists, these doors narrowed at the top,—even the general distribution of the apartments,—everything, in fact, though with greatly improved means of execution, reminds one of Vâmadêva's house, and not at all of the palaces of the Egyptian monarch and of the Assyrian king."

"Well?"

"Well ! I should conclude from this similarity to the one, and want of resemblance to the others, that the Ionian peoples belong to a branch of the Aryas that has preserved, almost intact, the Aryan traditions."

"If, as thou maintainest, there are races of men, each possessing special aptitudes, how should these tribes, so far removed from the Upper Indus, have preserved those traditions more faithfully than those nearer to the plateaus of Central Asia?"

"The Medes and the Assyrians are certainly less distant from those plateaus than are the Ionians ; and thou assert-

¹ See plan figure 18.

est that the Assyrian dwellings differ essentially from the habitations of those ancient Aryas."

"The Medes, and especially the Assyrians, long established in the territory which they occupy, may have come under influences from the peoples who previously inhabited those regions, and with whom they intermixed; these on the other hand journeyed very much further, but not having halted on their route, might have brought their ancient traditions as far as these shores where they have settled down.

"Perhaps at this day, among the numerous emigrants who continue travelling westwards, following the shores of the Caspian and Euxine, there are some destined to carry those early traditions still further away from their point of departure."

"I do not see the least resemblance between these Ionians, with their slightly coppery skin, black hair and eyes, and the fair-haired Aryas; so that the hallucination which leads thee to believe in different races of men, will bring thee here into contradiction with thy theory."

"Not so fast: I have already noticed in this country women with very white skin and fawn-coloured hair; and purity of blood is better preserved in women than in men."

"Ah! that is another of thy fancies."

"Yes, the result of my observations."

"But what is the drift of all this?"

"It is that I find among these populations which are akin to the Aryan stock, when they have been merged in too powerful a current of another race, elements of progress which charm me and fill me with hope; whereas, if I visit an Egyptian or even an Assyrian dwelling, I may retain a profound impression of admiration, but nothing seems to remain to be attempted, nothing to be added, nothing to be modified."

"Which is nothing more nor less than saying, that

things which are perfect charm thee less than those which might become so?"

"Exactly."

"I well knew what was in thy mind; but I am happy to hear thee express it. Answer me in thy turn: Dost thou remember that day in the remote past when, seated on a mountain, we saw creatures armed with sticks, killing each other?"

"Certainly, I remember it."

"Everything was duly ordered by the Creator; all things were perfect and complete; the work was finished. Nature, tranquil and productive, was peopling the waters and the dry land, everything being in the place assigned it: nothing was disturbing the supreme law. The fancy seized thee to teach some of these creatures to make a hut, as if the Creator had not given them, as well as all animated beings, what was suitable to their kind.

"Since then these creatures have called themselves *men*; urged on by a spirit of infatuation—that spirit which predominates in thee—they have not been able to restrain themselves; falling one upon another, the hungry upon the full, the poor upon those who had possessions, they have despoiled and hunted one another without truce or rest. Subsequently we have seen the strongest and most numerous enslaving the weakest, and making them work to increase their comforts; thy hut of branches has become a house provided with everything,—even with slaves. The house has become a palace; the palace has been surrounded with defensive walls; and the greater the increase of luxury, the more have cupidity, envy, and hatred accumulated around. And so we have seen the inhabitants of the huts uniting to overthrow the palace, and the towns and palaces uniting to get possession of countries more rich in palaces and houses than their own. Is that what thou callest progress?"

“I like to hear thee express this indignation, Doxius ; but hearken. Is it the spark that is the cause of the conflagration, or the accumulation of combustible materials ? I admit that I have been and that I am the spark ; but what would become of this spark if it did not find inflammable materials in the spot where it falls ? Were I to show the swallows how to build nests of a different structure from those they make at present, they would none the less continue to fabricate the little dwellings which we see hanging at the eaves. Thou canst not but agree with me that man’s intelligence leads him to improve upon and alter the processes adopted by his predecessors. The Creator, since thou bringest Him in question, has probably willed that it should be so ; consequently, all our efforts should tend to hasten this advance towards that better to which man aspires. If I see man’s work arrested in a path that has no issue, I may consider this work good in itself ; it excites my curiosity and admiration ; but it rouses in me no enthusiasm ; it does not create in me the desire to aid in its transformation, since it cannot be transformed. And to revert to my comparison : when I consider the work of the bees, I am struck with wonder, and delighted ; but it does not occur to me to suggest to the bees a better or a different mode of employing their industry. Well, then ! when I visit the dwellings of the Egyptians, I find them admirable and remarkable ; but I do not see how to transform or modify a thing which is perfect, if you will, but which—as finished—already expresses all that it can express. It is quite different when I find myself among men like these. What we have before our eyes, not only charms me by the result obtained, but suggests to me conceptions still more ingenious, proportions more delicate, and harmonies more pleasing. In a word : here, I hope ; here I feel myself seized with the desire of making improvements. In those Egyp-

tian palaces, and even in the Assyrian, there comes over me a sense of weariness and discouragement ; for there could be no change in them, should these nations last for ever. No revival is to be hoped for there ; we have a tree whose trunk, once cut down, will throw out no fresh shoots.

“See how ingeniously the timbers of this framing are arranged ; but observe, also, how these combinations stimulate one to seek new ones, still more ingenious.

“Is this work perfect, however? No ; it has not the simple majesty of Egyptian art, nor the sturdy strength and indestructible aspect of the Assyrian buildings, but it *speaks* ; one feels that here every workman must have contributed his share of intelligence, and has left the imprint of his labour. We do not behold here, as in Assyria, the effort of beings in vast numbers acting mechanically under the master’s rod, and piling up materials without knowing what the result will be. Here each one must have worked with the consciousness of a motive for his labour, and in view of the final result. Dost thou not appreciate this view?”

“I cannot share an opinion which appears to me dangerous, however seductive. I deem wise not him who is continually seeking, but him who having found the good, is concerned only how to preserve it.”

“But if thy opinion had been accepted ever since men have been upon the earth, the whole human race would be living scarcely sheltered under trees, and would be feeding on roots and reptiles ; for just now thou wert reproaching me for having in the earliest ages taught a few savages the art of building themselves huts.”

“Mischief was already done ; but the wise should know how to stop on an incline which is leading to the abyss of confusion. I like the Egyptians, because they were able to halt after having reached a wonderful degree of civilisation.

“What is progress, if it is not the seeking for a good? What is wisdom, if it is not the keeping of this good, and preserving it from every attack? What thou callest progress, is a restless advance; my idea of progress . . . (but I do not like the word—it does not express my notion) my view is, then, that when the steps that lead to the summit have been ascended, it is advisable to stop at that summit; otherwise there must be a going down again!” . . .

“Yes: better go down again to reach a summit farther off and still higher, than halt; for to halt is to die, and though man is destined to repose in death, such is not the destiny of humanity.”

At this point the discussion was broken off by the entrance of the architect Eudexion.

“We were admiring the residence thou hast built for that wealthy personage, whom the gods protect. He has been kind enough to send for thee to satisfy our curiosity; for everything here is new to us,” said Epergos. “Wilt thou please to enlighten us?”

“This habitation,” answered Eudexion, “resembles many others, and I do not claim to have done anything more than conform to the customs of Ionia.”

“That may be; but we have nowhere else observed this art of framing timber; whence did you derive it?”

“Formerly, as our elders relate, there being a great abundance of timber in the country, our fathers constructed dwellings entirely composed of trunks of trees. But our neighbours, the Tyrrhenians, built and still build their dwellings with large stones, which they skilfully joint and work. The employment of these solid and durable materials has been gradually adopted by us; nevertheless the custom of living in timber houses was too general among the Ionians to allow of its being abandoned. We have therefore amalgamated the two systems, and ceasing to treat timber

except as material which had to be left in contact with the inhabitants, we have encased this structure with stone, of which the walls and the most solid parts are composed. That is why you see our walls covered on the inside with wooden panelling. Columns, linings, and window frames of wood, such as these, were all roughly executed a century or so ago; but now we have skilful workmen. First the unhewn posts were squared; then the angles were taken off, and in this way these many-sided columns came to be fashioned. The rude caps which were placed on the top of these posts, to relieve the bearing of the beams, were carved at the ends in volutes. The whole has been covered, as you see, with painting, which beautifies and preserves it. As regards the roofs and ceilings, we continue to make them of wood; though giving them a more and more elegant appearance, as the taste of each may suggest, and enriching them with painting and even gilding.

“To prevent these wooden columns from being affected at their lower extremity by the dampness of the soil, we place them on stone bases. In short, these new buildings are like those much older ones which you may still see in the country, and affect nothing more than to reproduce the older arrangements with more elegance and studied refinement in the execution of the details. We have the art of working tin, copper, silver, and gold, and giving to these metals all the forms which the workmen choose to adopt: you will observe how the woodwork and furniture have been enriched with delicate ornamentation in metal. It is, moreover, not very long since we began to overlay the rough walls with plaster. We derived this art from the countries of the East, where they burn stone to make lime, which, mixed with sand, enables us to get the smooth surfaces so well adapted for painting on. We even apply a very light coating of this lime, ground up with the fine dust of hard

stone or fine sand, upon our timber work, to preserve it from the action of the sun, and as a surface for painting ; but this requires great care."

"And what wood do you employ thus?"

"Cedar, cypress, and sycamore ; these kinds of wood are beginning to become rarer, and already some wealthy persons have had columns cut in blocks of stone, exactly adhering to the form of those made of wood. The day will come when the cappings also will be cut in stone ; there is nothing to prevent this ; but they must be less projecting, to avoid their breaking under the superimposed weight, for stone has not the flexibility of wood. Would you like to inspect one of the bedchambers, while the family are in the garden?" "With pleasure."

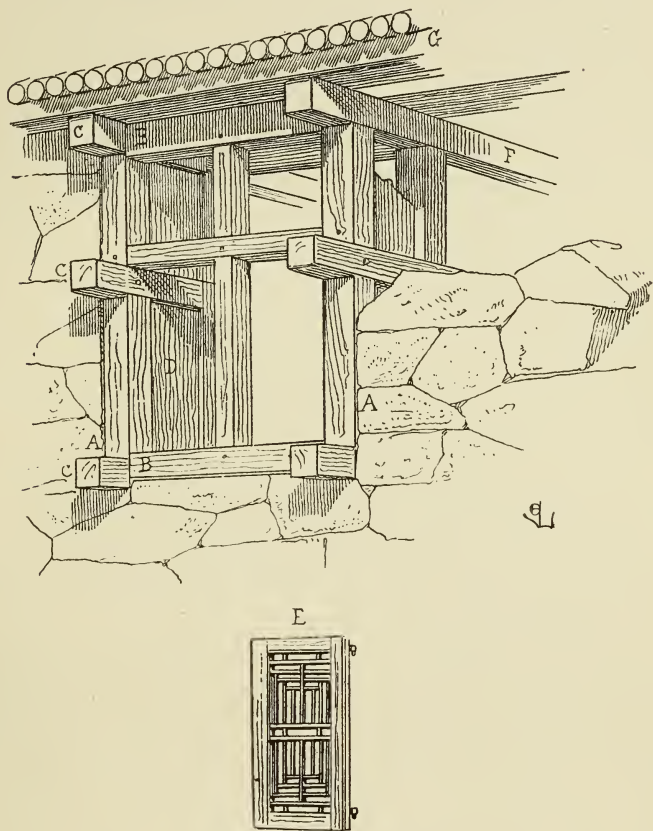
"You observe that these chambers, which are small, receive light only by the doorway opening under the portico. This doorway is closed by a wooden leaf and a curtain ; the door may therefore be left open at night to admit fresh air. Each of these chambers has a ceiling of coloured wood ; the walls have their upper parts painted, and are wainscoted below with costly wood. A bedstead, likewise of wood inlaid with ivory, occupies the further end of the chamber. At the side is a small table and a stool. The floor is covered with mats very finely worked, and a lamp is placed on a bronze support."

"Contact with stone is manifestly avoided everywhere."

"Certainly ; and this, as I was observing, results from the long-continued habit of living among dwellings made of wood. Besides, in this country, contact with stone is insalubrious, and occasions pains in the limbs.

"To show you how careful we are in this respect, observe those windows which light the two entrance-halls of the outer front. Examine (fig. 63) how these openings are constructed.

“The window forms a box-frame built into the opening, and consists of two uprights A, two cross-pieces B, and on



Window of Ionian House.—FIG. 63.

either side three tie-pieces C, which constitute the thickness of the stone wall, and are framed into other uprights on the inside.

“The interspaces D are filled by wooden panels, as well as the soffit and the sill. A cross-frame divides the window into four parts, in each of which is hinged a latticed sash E. Thus the hand never comes in contact with the stone. These window-frames have the additional advantage of

keeping up the irregular masonry which surrounds them. The pieces F form ceiling beams projecting outside and carrying the plate G, which receives the rafters of the roof—simple round poles upon which are nailed the planks covered with tiles that compose the roofing. These tiles are glazed by fire to make the rain water run off more readily, and to prevent the dust from remaining on them. The roofings thus formed presenting clear and brilliant colours, and shining in the sun like gold or silver, are pleasant to the sight, and prevent the heat from penetrating as it would if the tiles were unglazed.”

“I see that every arrangement has been made to render these dwellings agreeable and healthy. Do they never build in this country with unburnt brick or clay as in Assyria and Egypt?”

“No, never; because we have violent rains that last some weeks, and the ground is often shaken by earthquakes.

“Our timber constructions surrounded by stone are proof against these shocks, and prevent the damp from penetrating into the interior.

“You will understand that these coffers of wood and beams support the walls, and prevent them from disuniting. Look how securely the portal is supported by this timber screen. The two ends of the walls cannot stir, strongly stayed as they are, and kept in place everywhere. Formerly walls of unburnt brick were built in our country as among the Medes, but they were soon injured by the damp, and fell to pieces at the least agitation of the ground.”

“But if timber should fail, could you not employ stone, not only for your columns and points of support, but also for lintels and cornices?” “Probably: hitherto we have not been obliged to do so; moreover, as I said before, we prefer to avoid contact with stone in our dwellings, and we shall always be obliged, in conformity with local usage, to line the interior surbases, at least, with wood.”

At this point in the conversation, the master of the house joined the three interlocutors, and asked them to go into the garden. Shaded by the glossy foliage of lemon-trees, and reclining on a carpet spread over a very light bronze couch, was the mistress of the house, surrounded by three little boys. A female slave of the Semitic race was waving a large fan of palm-leaves over the head of her mistress ; while another woman, seated at her feet, was singing to amuse the children, who were listening attentively.

A rivulet, clear as crystal, was rippling along a channel hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, and, separating into small irrigation trenches, was lost amid the grass and flowers. The mistress was attired in a long white robe, embroidered in brilliant colours, slit on both sides, and falling in numerous delicate folds. A closely-fitting corsage enveloped the bust, reaching as far as the hip ; the neck was bare, and was adorned with a wide, rich, gold collar, which fell crescent-wise over the breast. Her hair, of a dark fawn colour, fell over her shoulders in long and luxuriant tresses, and a coiffure of transparent tissue, in which gold threads were interwoven, surrounded her head. Bracelets of gold encircled her bare arms. On seeing Eudexion and the visitors approach, she smiled courteously ; then addressing the architect, she said to him in a tone of indifference : “ Hast thou not visited the treasurer’s house ? ”

“ It is large and beautiful, adorned with stone columns, covered with finely-wrought sculpture, and many ornaments from various quarters ; you see Median vases, Tyrrhenian bronzes, Egyptian statues, and Assyrian carpets, and light, transparent hangings placed over the area of the courts.”

“ Is it not shameful to make such a display of luxury, when one is entrusted with the public money ? ”

“ These articles are presents from the merchants in consideration of a remission of duties. It is a mere tasteless

accumulation ; and I prefer this house, where everything is in the place suited for it, to that one, filled though it is with rare and costly objects."

"Yes ; because you built this yourself ?" "No ; but because it has been arranged by a mistress of refined taste, and who can appreciate things at their right value."¹

The lady smiled at this compliment, and addressing the visitors said : "What do you think of Ionia,—you who come from such remote parts, and have visited so many countries ?" "It seems to us," Epergos hastened to reply, "that it is the most beautiful country in the world, and inhabited by the most amiable and polished of nations."

"Thou flatterest me ; but never mind, for flattery is sweet when it is addressed to the country one loves." "And which is the envy of so many enemies," replied the master ; "for while we have to struggle with the Pelasgi, these strangers announce an invasion of barbarians from the north-eastern mountains." "Indeed," responded his wife. "Oh !" said Epergos, "you need not be anxious ; the Ionians will not have to fight these barbarians until your children themselves shall have left the earth."

The lady became pensive. A murmur of voices was heard without, and a slave came and whispered some words in the ear of his master, who immediately directed his steps towards the entrance of the house. "What is the matter, then ?" said the beautiful Ionian addressing her women. "Some people on business," replied the singer. Evidently disquieted, the mistress of the house arose. Her husband, pale and tottering, was re-entering the garden. To the questioning looks of his wife his only reply was : "The priests of Poseidon. . . the fleet does not return. . . victims are wanted to appease the god."

"Ah ! and what victims ?"

"Ten children of noble birth."

"And . . . they are asking for thine ? . . ."

“For one!”

“Why not for all three!” said the mother, now rousing herself like a lioness, and with an instinctive movement enveloping her children in her long robe.

Overwhelmed with sorrow, his eyes fixed on the ground, and his arms falling forwards, the master seemed incapable of a suggestion or a reply. “And . . . thou hast told these priests,” continued his wife, “that thy child was here,—that thou wouldst give him up to them,—is it not so? thou hast said that? . . . But answer then! . . . which of the three didst thou point out? . . . Say! . . . Must I not decorate him for sacrifice? Which? Which?”

“I could say nothing—I could not answer . . . the priests are waiting.”

“Well! choose then!” and with a hasty movement she pushed forward her children, who fell at their father’s feet, uttering cries of terror and grief. But immediately throwing herself on these three little creatures, taking them up in her bare arms, and pressing them to her bosom in a stifling embrace, she added, “Go and tell the priests of Poseidon that they may come and take their victims,—they shall have four for the one they ask.”

The master seemed to look upon the scene as if he were a stranger; his apathy and the vague expression of his features contrasted with the violent gestures and the infuriated looks of the mistress. . . . Epergos and Doxius, at some distance off, were inquiring of the slave the cause of the trouble that had so suddenly befallen this family, so tranquil a few moments before. “If the gods will have it so!” said Doxius. Epergos shrugged his shoulders and clenched his fists. Outside the murmur was increasing. “Come!” said the master, as if waking up from a heavy slumber, “we must have done with it!” And going towards his wife with his eyes closed, he took at hazard the

arm of one of his children. She let the poor little creature go, and seeming calmed all at once, followed her husband. Arrived at the garden-gate, she placed herself before him, and then, shrieking, seized the child once more. "No!" said she, "not Doricmes; take one of the two others!" . . .

"The gods have decided it."

"Not Doricmes; it shall not be Doricmes!"

"Silence, woman; the gods have decided it."

"Well! take him then; and woe be to thee!"

And while the father was entering the passage which conducted to the court, the mother, with dishevelled hair and furious mien, returned to her two other children who had remained in the hands of the women, snatched them hastily away, and regained the house.

Next day this beautiful dwelling was a heap of cinders. Maddened by grief, and accusing the gods, their priests, and her husband, the wretched mother, after having suffocated with her own hand the two children that remained to her, laid them in their little beds, heaped around them their playthings, their clothes, and all that belonged to them, and set fire to this pyre of souvenirs. . . .

On its smoking ruins the master was received by a fury with the reiterated exclamation: "Doricmes will have had a splendid funeral!"



Asiatic Ionian.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE HELLENES.

THE surge of Aryan emigration was rolling ever westwards, and numerous tribes belonging to this race had established themselves on the plateaus of Thessaly, Epirus, and Thrace.

Energetic, hardy, and intrepid, they took possession of the countries already occupied by the Pelasgi, became mingled with the latter, and occupied, under the name of Hellenes, the countries situated between Thessaly and Peloponnesus, part of the islands of the Archipelago, and even some districts of Asia Minor.

Divided into four great branches, the Hellenes comprised the Achæans, the Æolians, the Dorians, and the European Ionians.

Arts, commerce, manufactures, and agriculture soon attained a most extraordinary development among these active and warlike peoples, when they had settled in those regions—so favourable to the increase of wealth of all kinds—which had been previously occupied by the Pelasgi. Among the cities which rose on the Hellenic soil, Athens acquired a marked preponderance from the importance of its marine, its commerce, and the singular aptitude of its inhabitants for works of skill of every description.

Destroyed by the Persians, it speedily rose again from its ruins more beautiful and glorious than before. Around its Acropolis covered by sacred buildings, the city extended

far and wide, with its temples, its public places and edifices, and its houses intermingled with verdure.

No city displayed greater activity ; for any one coming from Asia it seemed as if in entering Athens he was coming into an ants' nest. Possessing, at the epoch of its greatest power, the three ports of Munychia, Phalerum and the Piræus, it covered a district whose circumference measured two hundred stadia (twenty-four miles). But it was around the Acropolis that the houses were crowded together and the population always in activity. There wag-gons were passing to and fro, filled with merchandise from the ports or conveying it thither. The streets and public places in which people passed their lives presented a busy and noisy scene. Strangers, who came to buy or to sell, were continually entering or leaving the shops and places of manufacture, and slaves were carrying messages or burdens.

Women as well as men were to be seen in the streets, going to the markets, the public games and the meetings of corporate bodies. From the earliest hours of the day large numbers of peasants might be seen bringing in vegetables, fruit, and poultry, and crying their wares in the streets.

Houses of the higher class occupied the second zone ; they generally possessed a garden and sometimes outbuildings of considerable extent. Around them were to be seen clients and parasites, waiting for the hour when the master should make his appearance ; and whiling away the time in discussing the news of the day, repeating the rumours, true or false, that were current in the city ; getting the slaves to talk, and laughing among themselves at the strangers that happened to be passing, or addressing them with a view to make fun of their accent, garb or dress.

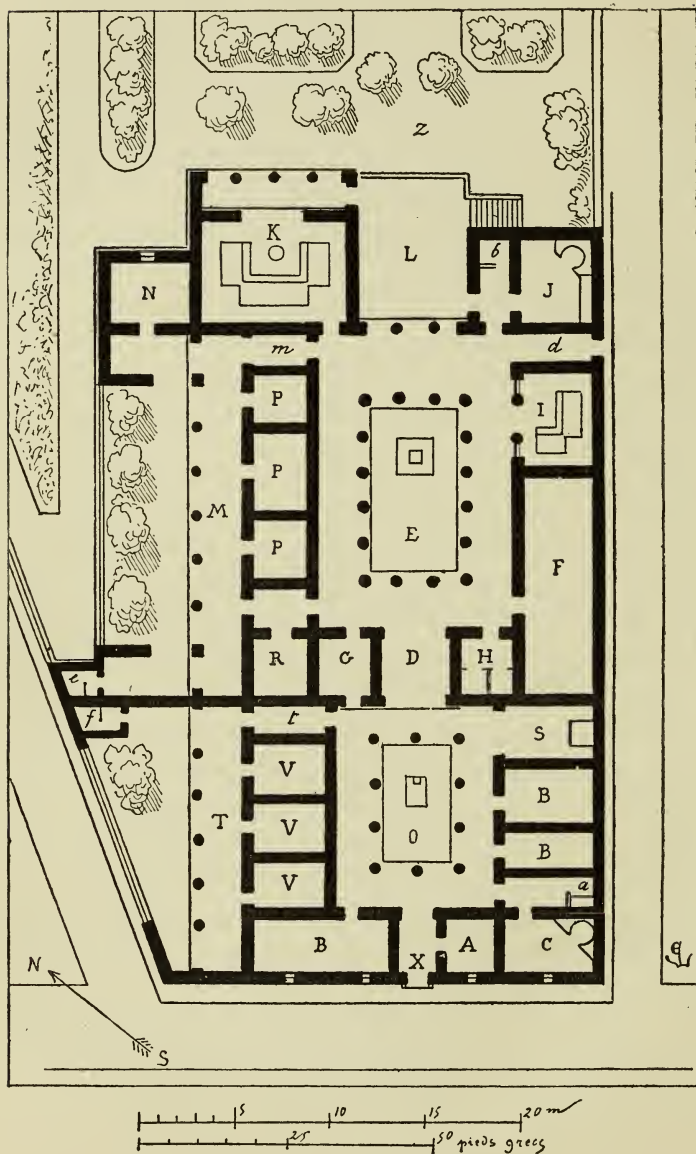
The house of Chremylus, recently built in that second zone, was a subject of remark for all the idlers. Chremylus, who had lately become wealthy by means of commerce,

and of certain transactions of a more or less creditable character in the colonies, was an object of envy and criticism to most people, and of admiration for some who did justice to his intelligence and energy. He enjoyed a certain degree of influence in the public assemblies—thanks to his liberality; while he took care to secure the good graces of the archons and to enrich the temples.

We have (fig. 64) the ground-plan of the residence of this Athenian citizen. The entrance X opens on the public road. The site is bounded on either side by narrow streets. This entrance X opens on the court O, which is surrounded by porticos. At A is the porter's lodge, and at B the rooms for the slaves, with kitchen at C and latrines at *a*. From this first court, in the centre of which is a small fountain with a basin which receives the rain water, the passage D leads into the inner court E, which is larger and is likewise surrounded by porticos. At G is the reception-room, at H the strong room for valuables, and at S the private altar. At F is a large storeroom containing provisions and wine; and at I the small dining-room (*triclinium*); the cooking-room for the family being at J with latrines at *b*. The large *triclinium* is at K. The passage *m* admits to the *gynæceum*, containing the bedrooms P along the portico M, a common room for the women, with its small enclosed garden, and closets at *e*. The quarters for visitors are entered by the passage *t*, and consist of bedrooms V, a portico T, a small garden and closets *f*. At *d* is an opening into the lane for the servants, when required. The gardens extend in the direction Z.

This house is situated on the slopes of the hill which to the south-west looks towards the Acropolis; thus it is sheltered from the violent winds which sometimes blow from this quarter.

From the large dining-hall and from the terrace L, which



Plan of Athenian House.—FIG. 64.

adjoins it, there is a charming prospect; for, above the trees of the garden is seen the city overlooked by the Acropolis, and towards the left the hill of the Areopagus. From this terrace L there is a descent to the garden by about twelve steps. The position was chosen with a view to protection against the sun's heat and the troublesome winds. From the portico of the gynæceum are seen the hills extending towards the north, covered with houses surrounded by olive-trees; and in the background Mount Pentelicus, whose bare and rugged flanks present the changing colours of the opal.

In the dwelling of Chremylus the various departments were arranged at the proprietor's discretion, and the architect only conformed to his instructions. Thus the front part of the house is assigned to the external relations of the owner. In this court O assemble the agents or factors who come to give an account of the commissions they have executed, or to receive orders. If the master wishes to speak to one of them, he takes him into his reception-room; his bedchamber being at R, he can easily repair to that reception-room or to the gynæceum reserved for the women and younger children.

If he entertain friends, they have their separate apartments, which are shut off, not being in communication with the first court except through the passage *t*. All that part of the habitation which is beyond the wide entrance-hall D is consecrated to domestic life; and only the intimate friends of the family are admitted into the second court; for example, if they are invited to a banquet,—which is held in the great hall K.

The master usually takes his meals with his wife and one or two members of his family who live in the house, in the smaller room I, the couches of which will hold six

persons ; whereas fifteen guests can be accommodated on the couches of the great hall K.

Chremylus has spared nothing to render his house one of the most sumptuous in the city. The columns of Pentelican marble support architraves of wood, surmounted by friezes and cornices overlaid with stucco and ornamented with delicate painting. Everywhere the walls are coated with fine smooth plaster, adorned with paintings ; and the ceilings are of timber artistically wrought and coloured.

Epergos, who on several occasions had sojourned for a considerable time in Hellas (for he liked its people more than any other he had visited), had not a little contributed to the progress of the arts and of manufacturing industry among the Athenians ; while Doxius had remained nearly the whole time in Assyria and Egypt. He had witnessed the fall of Nineveh, the war of the Persians with the Assyrians, and the termination of this powerful empire which was subjugated by Cyrus. When Doxius had happened to meet his companion in Hellas, he had not been sparing of his criticisms on all he saw done among its active and striving populations, which were constantly changing their government, and inclined to free themselves from their traditions. He had predicted the ruin of the Hellenes, whom he regarded as unruly children, always citing Egypt and Asia as the sources of all wisdom ; though Egypt was visibly declining and the Median empire was crumbling to pieces. So during one of the last visits which Doxius paid to Athens, after its destruction by the army of Xerxes, he was endeavouring to induce Epergos to quit for ever these devastated shores ; but Epergos, full of confidence in the genius of his friends the Athenians, set to work again with them to restore the burned city, as he had formerly aided the Aryan to restore his hut thrown down by the tempest. Besides, Epergos liked discussion.

and in no other country had he had so many opportunities for it as at Athens.

When the Hellenes began to occupy a large part of Greece, after having subjugated the Pelasgi, they brought with them notions of arts of a very rude character, borrowed from Asia. The Pelasgi, on their part, had made but little progress since the time when they built those massive structures of which we have seen a specimen.¹ But the various relations which were soon established between the Hellenes, the Ionians, and the Lycians of the coasts of Asia, gave to the first the notions of art in which they were deficient. They began therefore to build habitations like those of their Asiatic neighbours, while preserving something of Pelasgic customs. Wood suitable for building was however by no means abundant in Greek lands, while there was a profusion of calcareous stone of rare beauty. They began therefore to substitute columns and capitals of stone or marble for those of wood; and were then led to give these capitals a much smaller development than the Ionians gave them, lest they should break under their burden. Their general form was however retained,—that of a capital in wood terminated by volutes; and these capitals retained the name “Ionic.” For a long time, however, they contented themselves with this modification induced by the change of the material.

We cannot say whether it was Epergos who first pointed out to the Dorians,—a branch of the Hellenes, as stated above,—the want of relation between the form of this Ionic capital and the material thenceforth employed—namely, calcareous stone. Certain it is, however, that these Dorians, induced by considerations of this nature, abandoned the traditional form of the wooden capitals to adopt a new one springing from the use of stone. There must have been

¹ See figures 56, 57, and 58.

long discussions on this question among the architects of Hellas, though they may not have been preserved : but reason triumphed ; the Ionic capital, derived from that of wood, was abandoned, and that which was adopted took the name of " Doric."

This sturdy capital, which projected considerably beyond the shaft of the column in its original form, gradually received a finer profile ; and, at the time when Chremylus had his house built, the Doric capital already presented the most delicate outline.

Chremylus had an esteem for Epergos, and had often consulted him while his house was being built : so when it was finished, and he had begun to live in it, he resolved to assemble some of his friends at a banquet within its walls ; for the Athenians highly prize the pleasures of the triclinium, when shared with intelligent persons whose conversation is worth hearing.

Chremylus had the art of enlivening his guests ; having selected them with care, and set them talking on a subject adapted to excite their enthusiasm, he would, as a man of intelligence, be silent himself, and leave them to the discussion. If the conversation languished, or a loss of temper was impending, he would politely revive it or give a pleasant turn to acrid debate. Any one who was a guest of Chremylus considered himself fortunate, for they were chosen from the most refined society of Athens. And this was not the least of those occasions of jealousy of which the envious made a handle against the wealthy parvenu.

For this inauguration banquet the house had been decorated with care, and the gardens filled with flowers. The guests arrived in the afternoon, elegantly apparelled, and met beneath the first portico. There were ten of them ; for Chremylus was of opinion that for the party to be a pleasant

one this number should not be exceeded. They were no strangers to each other; and among them were two philosophers of high repute in Athens, a dramatic author, two archons, a celebrated painter, the architect, Epergos and Doxius. It was not the custom at that time for women to be present at banquets. Without keeping his guests



Interior of Athenian House.—FIG. 65.

waiting, Chremylus, when he knew that they were assembled, came to receive them under the first portico, and introduced them into the second court, separated from the first by curtains woven in lively colours. This second court,

also surrounded by porticos supported by Doric columns of white marble, more spacious than the first, afforded a view of the gardens and the city above them, through the colonnade at the further end.¹ Towards the extremity of the open part of the court was a marble fountain with its basin, diffusing an agreeable freshness (fig 65). The columns, finely fluted two-thirds of the way from the top, were coloured red on the lower part, which was left smooth; while the marble of the upper part was slightly tinted with a very pale yellow enriched with black and white ornamentation under the ovolo of the capital. The architrave, composed of pieces of cedar coupled together, was covered with a plaster coating as thin as an egg shell, and also coloured yellow. The frieze was composed of triglyphs over each column—triglyphs which were only the ends of the beams supporting the joists of the ceiling of the porticos; and between them fillings in of thick planks of cedar covered with a delicately painted plaster coating. Next came the projecting cornice, likewise of wood, carrying the gutter made of coloured terra cotta, which was pierced with several openings to let the rain water through, and which was surmounted by carved heads of animals. The triglyphs, painted in light blue, contrasted with the tints of the decorations near them, which were in red, black, and white, on a yellow ground.

The brilliancy of the sunlight and the azure of the sky wonderfully harmonised this light and transparent colouring, set off by the red and dark yellow background of the portico walls.

The guests did not fail to congratulate Chremylus and the architect; for they knew that the master of the house had a great esteem for him. "Yes," said Chremylus, "address your compliments to this good Eicos, for I have

¹ See the plan, figure 64.

sometimes made him very angry . . . but he is so expensive ! that is my excuse."

After they had admired the paintings of the small triclinium—representing young girls bringing offerings to the god Pan—and the refined beauty of the bronze couches, inlaid with silver, they repaired to the garden which Chremylus had improvised. He had had trenches sunk in the living rock and filled with vegetable soil. There flourished the orange and the lemon-tree, rose-trees and laurels, and a profusion of aromatic plants. Not only so ; at great expense the master had had transplanted thither full-grown olives, fig-trees and plane-trees.

Small channels nicely hollowed out in marble distributed the water in every direction, and slaves were constantly engaged in keeping the walks and shrubs in order.

When the supper was ready, they repaired to the larger triclinium, where each took his place (fig 66). The viands and wines were immediately brought by young slaves, the best to be found in Athens ; whilst two flute-players, moving backwards and forwards in the gardens before the festal hall, filled the air with melodies now soft and slow, now lively and spirited.

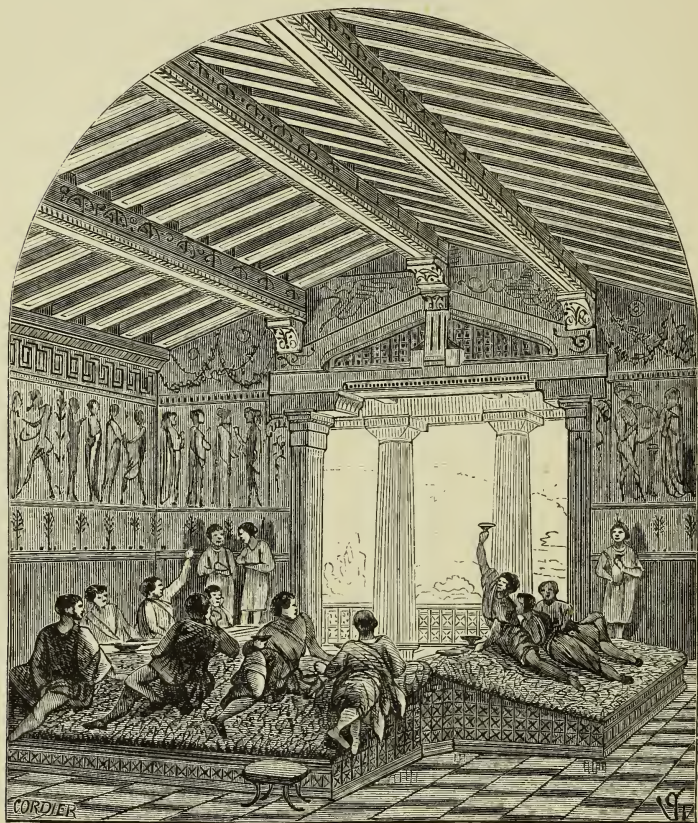
Soon, thanks to the flagons of excellent Lesbian, the conversation became animated.

"I regard Athens as the queen of cities," said Epergos. "What is the magnificence of the Persians with its tedious ceremonial, compared to the liberty enjoyed here?"

"Licence," said Doxius.

"What," said Epergos, to provoke his companion, "are those Egyptian banquets amid which a coffin is carried about—to induce the guests (say the inhabitants of Memphis) to be more eager in the enjoyment of the good things of earth—and during which all the talk is of

bags of wheat and flocks of geese, compared with these social gatherings, in which one can scarcely say which is to be preferred, the good cheer or the conversation? Boy!



The Large Triclinium.—FIG. 66.

give me some more of that partridge stewed in the lees of old wine—'tis a dish fit for the gods!"

"By Bacchus," said Doxius, "take care of thy wits, Epergos."

"Nonsense, Doxius! my ideas are as clear as this air

which allows us to see from this spot the sentinels on the ramparts of the Acropolis."

"Ah!" interrupted one of the philosophers, "can we ever affirm that we see a thing?"

"I fancy so at least."

"Yes, thou fanciest so, Epergos, my good friend; but thou wilt allow that all we see is only an appearance; nothing proves that it really exists. Art thou certain even of thy own existence?"

"By all the gods! here is a cup full: I drink what it contains; it does me a great deal of good and gives me a great deal of pleasure—and the cup is emptied; therefore . . ."

"Therefore, it is thy mind that experiences this pleasure and takes for granted this good—nothing more." . . .

"Ah!" said the other philosopher, "there is *Distasis* off again! . . . Give him something to drink, or we shall tumble into annihilation; house and couches and garden, everything but himself, will have vanished, and! . . . Well, my good fellow, let me live on appearances, if there is nothing but appearance; the name makes no difference to the thing."

"But it does make a great difference; for if all we see is only an appearance residing in our own spirits, a product of our own mind, nothing exists but mind."

"Yes; it is all very well to say so after a good dinner; but if within twenty-four hours hence thou shouldst not find the appearance of a glass of wine and a slice of ham to repair thy appearance of a body, I should like to know what would become of thy mind!

"Is it not more correct to say that the soul is only the harmony established by our organs duly performing their functions? If thou hast caught a fever, does thy mind judge of things in the same way as if thou wert in health?"

And does not an appearance of a stone falling on thy appearance of a skull send thy mind packing?"

"Packing where?"

"Who can tell! perhaps into the appearance of a frog! . . ."

"Come, do not discompose thyself; drink Chremylus' health with me."

"Well!" said Epergos, "if we let our two philosophers get wrangling on this ground, what shall we come to? One wants to persuade us that there is but a single soul in the world, and the other that souls pass their time in changing their skin. Let us hold by sound reason, if you please, and keep to what we see clearly. . . . What a beautiful ceiling! how grateful it is to the eye, and how refreshing to be cool while this opening gives us a view of the horizon all burning with light, and admits to us the perfumes of the garden. Mayst thou, Chremylus, long enjoy these good things thyself and make thy friends partakers of thy happiness! But," said he, addressing the architect, "tell us, Eicos, since thou wert in the humour for doing everything in the very best manner, why didst not thou make the entablatures of the porticos under which we were just walking, of marble?"

"Why!" replied Eicos, "Chremylus considered that even in building columns in marble I was spending too much money—in fact, ruining him."

"Yet, in your temples," continued Epergos, "among all the Dorians, you put entablatures of stone upon columns of the same material; and these entablatures do not differ sensibly in appearance from those which thou hast made here of wood. Is it logically consistent to give similar forms to architectural members made of different materials? Among the Medes and in Ionia, I observed that the materials employed dictated the form adopted in the

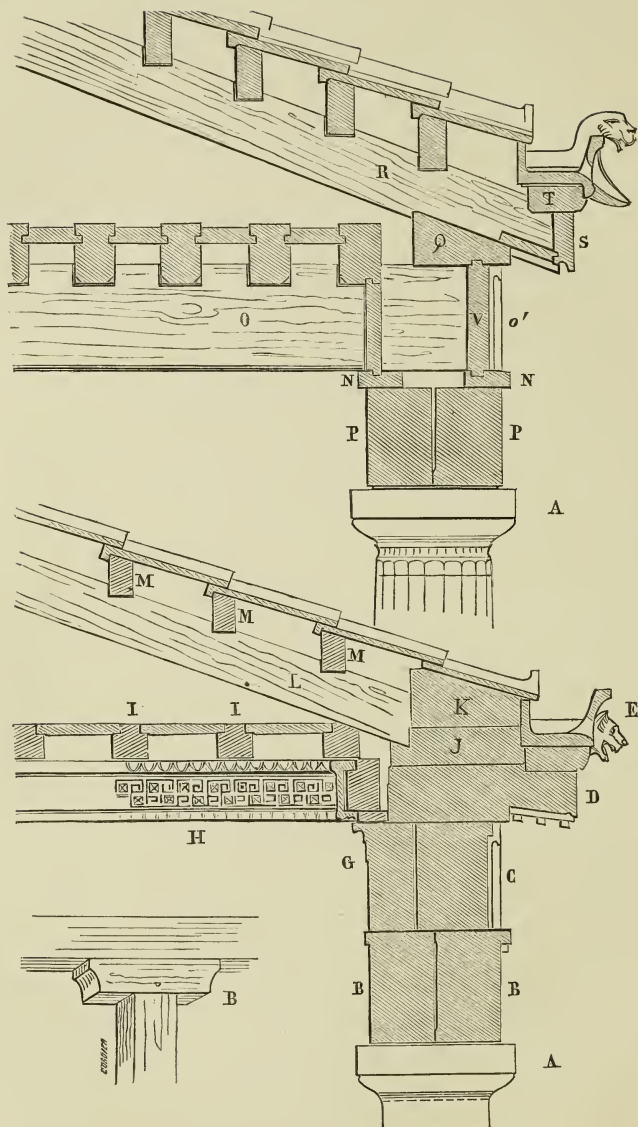
architecture. Understand me: I am not finding fault with thy porticos, which are admirable; but I should be glad to hear what thou hast to say on the subject."

"Thou knowest more about the matter than I do, Epergos; but thou wishest to make me talk: the question is a complicated one, however, and I am afraid I should tire you."

"By no means," said the guests, "there is always something good to be got from a discussion between clever people: go on therefore."

"Let me have a tablet, then, Chremylus; for I cannot explain myself without the help of a drawing."

One of the slaves having brought one of those boards painted white, on which merchants reckon up their accounts, and a piece of black stone, Eicos drew in a few minutes the two diagrams (fig. 67); then, having given the board to the slave to hold, so that every one could see it, he spoke thus: "Those who have reflected on the architecture adopted by the Dorians, perhaps know from what a variety of sources they have derived the elements of their architecture. Epergos, who has seen so much of the world, is more fully informed respecting this fact than I am. Some assert that the buildings of the Dorians in early times were originally constructed of wood, and that the forms of the order adopted by them are only a tradition of those early structures. For myself, I do not believe anything of the kind; for what I have seen on the coasts of Asia, where they still continued to build almost entirely in wood a short time ago, does not resemble the style in which we formerly built here. I maintain, on the contrary, that the necessity under which the Dorians lay of employing stone in the countries where they settled—countries which are not rich in timber—dictated the forms of certain important parts of the order originated by them. Thus,



The Doric Order.—FIG. 67.

for example, it is evident that the form A of the Doric capital could not be given to a capital in wood. If a cap of wood is to be placed on a post to support a beam, and to relieve it, its section would be as I have drawn at B; and in fact those who have visited Lycia and Caria may have seen wooden capitals of this form, and imitations of them in stone, preserving that form. To decorate the extremities of the capital, they have sculptured volutes upon them; and it is to them we must look for the origin of the Ionic capital. But it is very evident that the Doric capital, with its round columns and its square abacus, has no relation to the form that would be given to a piece of wood.

“That in early times they should often have made architraves of wood, such as we still make in our private buildings, is perfectly natural. Nevertheless, you will observe that the intercolumniations of the Doric order, in our oldest monuments, are very narrow; and that the reason of their being so was that too great a bearing should not be given to lintels or architraves of stone. If these architraves had been made of wood, the columns need not have been brought so close together, nor so great a projection given to the echini of the capitals; and we see distinctly that the further we go back to antiquity, the greater is the projection of these Doric capitals beyond the shaft of the column, in order as far as possible to relieve the architraves, which were then cut for the most part from stone of no great tenacity; whereās, as soon as they employed harder stones, such as marble, they enlarged the intercolumniations, and diminished the projection of the echinus of the capital. Moreover, if we employ neither stone nor marble for architraves, but wood, we make the intercolumniations wider, as you have seen here in the courts.

“Next let us pass to the frieze. Some have, in like

manner, asserted that the triglyphs which usually decorate the frieze in the Doric order represent the ends of the wooden joists which originally rested on the architrave: no conclusion is more unwarranted. In the first place, in our most ancient Doric edifices there are triglyphs in the frieze under the pediments, as there are in the lateral friezes. Now if the joists had their bearings upon the lateral architraves, they could not at the same time bear upon the architraves in front; and therefore their ends would not be visible there. It will be said that we have here an imitation—a tradition: I believe it is nothing of the kind. I appeal again to our most ancient buildings. In them we often observe that the triglyphs are stone blocks supporting the cornice, perpendicularly above each column, over the middle of the intercolumniation and the angles; while the metopes—that is to say, the spaces left between these triglyphs—remain void.

“The cornice, on the other hand, is evidently the consequence of the projection of the roof timbers; consequently its form must have been partly suggested by the predominance of wood in the construction. But it must be said that this original form was especially appropriated to the employment of stone, and that for a very considerable time. But—and it is in this that the Athenians show the versatility of their genius—without belying the forms which the material ought to dictate, a Doric entablature may be composed as well with timber as with stone, a few details excepted; and these two drawings will prove it.

“Let us first take the structure in stone: on the capital A architraves B are laid,—in two parts; for if one of the stones is imperfect, there is a chance that the other may not be so. These architraves bear from one column to another, the joints being perpendicular to the centres of these columns. But then, as I was saying, the inter-

columniations must be narrow enough to prevent these stone architraves from having too long a bearing. Therefore, if we employ this material, we do not allow more than two diameters (taken half-way down the column) between them, whereas if we adopt a wooden entablature these intercolumniations may be much wider. Next, the architraves being in place, we put over each column and in the middle of each intercolumniation, a block of stone, to which the name of triglyph is given, because it is usual to cut three vertical grooves on the exterior face of these blocks, to express their function as supports. For you will observe that when we desire to give an appearance of rigidity to a stile or vertical support—the columns, for example—we repeat the vertical line by flutings, lines, or grooves; this is a matter relating to art. On these triglyphs which thus form so many little piers on the architrave, the cornice D is placed, whose projection and profile remove the gutters E from the faces of the work beneath.

“This done, we may fill-in or leave void the spaces between the triglyphs; and put at the back a course G, whose projection receives the ceiling of wood H, composed of small beams which are covered with paintings or terra cotta, —beams which carry the joists I, between which are placed panels of glazed terra cotta, or of wood. The cornice receives the courses of stone J K, on which rest the rafters L of the roofing. Upon these rafters are notched the small purlins M, which serve to carry the tiles, and hinder them from slipping. You observe that this structure is very simple, that each part serves a purpose, and that, while nothing is deficient, there is not a single member which could be suppressed as useless. It is evident, therefore, that everything here has been combined in rational conformity with the nature of the material employed, namely, stone.

“Is it desired to construct with wood, for economy, or because we want wide intercolumniations and a slighter structure? On the capital A, of stone or marble, we put the two girders P of wood, which form the architrave, then the two listel plates N; over each column we put the beam O, whose end *o'* forms a triglyph or support for the cornice. Upon these triglyphs we place the plate Q, receiving the rafters R, which, overhanging, form a projection, and receive at their extremity a board S, forming the front of the eaves-drip, an upper plate T, to receive the gutters of terra cotta, and the under part of the drip. Between the triglyphs—which, in this case, only show over the columns and not between them—may be inserted the planks V composing the frieze. It is in this manner that the entablature of the portico in the great court of this house has been made.¹ The timbers, being all in the free air, and with spaces invariably left between them, cannot ferment or decay. Here, as in the stone structure, there is not a useless piece.* The wooden girders are relieved in their bearing, and serve no other purpose than to stay the columns. As these timbers are carefully painted, protected from the wet, and ventilated, they may last for centuries.

“You see, therefore, that the form given to the entablature of the Doric order, can be adapted, with some unimportant variations, to a structure in stone as well as to one of wood; in neither case involving the necessity of falsifying the form or the structure. I will not dissemble the circumstance that some architects combine the two methods, especially in Magna Græcia, where I have been able to ascertain the fact for myself; that is, they do not hesitate to lay friezes and courses of stone upon architraves of wood; but this is reprehensible, and is considered bad architecture.

¹ See Figure 65.

Wood, which is elastic, light, and compressible, crosswise of the grain, cannot be suitable for bearing stone which is compact, inelastic, and heavy.

"I say again: it is scarcely admissible that a wooden structure suggested the stone structure in the composition of the Doric order; indeed I should rather suppose the converse; especially since the farther we go back into antiquity the more the entablatures of the Doric order deviate from the style of a structure in wood, to conform to that dictated by the use of stone. Still it must be acknowledged that our architects have been able skilfully to adapt the form to the structure in both cases."

"By Athene!" said Chremylus, "Eicos shows us that he understands his art! fill his cup, he must be thirsty; I do not regret having got him to put wooden entablatures on the columns of my porticos, since he demonstrates so ably that they are in place there. But,—the rogue!—he did not tell me all this when we were talking about putting them up; indeed he assured me that it was a shame to put these painted timbers on columns of marble!"

"It would evidently have been better to complete them with marble," replied Eicos.

"Yes, certainly; but could you protect me against the informers who were beginning to croak like frogs after rain, when they saw these marble columns carted here? And what would they have said if, after the columns, the ox-teams had brought the entablatures of marble!"

"Allow me to ask thee one more question," said Epergos. "I saw among the Medes, and formerly in Assyria, as also among the Tyrrhenians and even the Etruscans, vaultings made of brick, unburnt or burnt, and likewise of stone; and here I have often recommended this kind of construction, which has the advantage of protecting buildings from fire, and preserving the interior effectually from heat and cold.

Now both the Hellenes and the Dorians of Sicily and of Magna Græcia have often seen vaultings among the neighbouring peoples ; why do they decline to adopt them ?”

“There are two principal reasons why they do not,” replied Eicos ; “the first, that the Greeks do not like to adopt the methods of barbarians ; or, if they do adopt them, it is with very considerable modifications. The second is that Greek artisans make a point of doing honour to their labour, and that vaultings require a coarse kind of toil which is not to their taste. Whether they are built of brick or of stone, recourse must be had to a great combination of appliances, and a multitude of workmen ; thick walls must be built, the vaults must be turned, and the haunches filled in. Now thou must observe that we do not use lime or mortar in our masonry, as is the custom in Media and in Egypt, but only to make plastering ; and vaults cannot be built without mortar. We might certainly compel slaves to perform this work, which requires more sweat than intelligence, but we are averse to doing so. Our workmen are organised in jealous corporations, who do not like to see barbarians engaged in works which they take a pride in accomplishing themselves. Thus slaves are employed only for carting, for work requiring brute force, or for bringing materials to the ground. Our carpenters and stone-cutters, our sculptors and painters, are free men, endowed moreover with an excessive amount of *amour-propre* : they desire that their labour should be appreciated ; and I have often seen common workmen take their friends along a building newly finished, to show them the stones they had cut, or the timbers they had framed.

“The capitals of the portico in this residence were turned and cut by four skilful workmen ; if one of them should chance to be summoned into the house, you may be quite sure he will cast a loving look at the parts wrought by him.

He knows thoroughly well whether they are on the right or the left side. It is owing to this feeling of pride, which is sometimes beyond bearing, that we are able to secure work whose execution is perfect. It is quite sufficient to tell one of our artisans that the work of one of his comrades is more careful than his, to make him surpass himself. But we have great difficulty in getting even tolerable work, if it is not destined to attract observation ; every one tries to shirk it. In such cases we are obliged to have recourse to slaves. This too is the reason why you do not see among us enormous edifices such as those of Egypt. No one could be found to cut the crowning stones, the work in which—on account of the height—can only be appreciated by the birds.”

“There is matter for reflection here,” said Epergos, after a moment’s silence. . . . “I see how the matter stands . . . and this explains antagonisms whose motives I did not perceive. . . . You love the arts so well that you make a point of keeping their various expressions within easy grasp. If your edifices are small compared with those of many other nations, it is because you wish to enjoy all their parts at a glance—to embrace their *ensemble* easily. Hellas has no such palaces to show as those of Babylon, which are too vast for one day’s exploration.”

“You are right. Not only have we no taste for edifices of too vast a size, and which, consisting of many parts in juxtaposition, do not possess that stamp of unity which we require in every work of art ; but thou wilt observe that the Greeks, in contradistinction to other nations, avoid a multiplicity of architectural features in their buildings. Whether it be a temple, a public building, or a private house, moderation is the supreme law ; and it is rather by the judicious arrangement of the structure and the study of the proportions that these edifices seek to please, than by the profusion of the ornaments and the accumulation of

those striking details which gratify barbarians. It must not be forgotten that we are a free people, jealous and sensitive to excess; inclined to criticism, and sparing of expense. Citizens, therefore, who are so fortunate as to possess large property, must be careful not to make a public display of it, and not offend the democratic sentiments of the nation by a show of luxury. Athens has many citizens, like our host, who might make a display of their riches; but what purpose would that serve except to excite envy and malevolent suspicions? A stranger passing through the streets of Athens might suppose that all its inhabitants lived in dwellings nearly equal in style. To mention only one example, the house of Clito, which is next to this, presents to the public road an entrance greatly resembling that of Chremylus. Yet Clito is a poor fellow who lives on chick peas. The dwellings of the Athenians are distinguished from each other only by the luxury or poverty of the interiors, into which intimate friends alone are admitted. Besides, we have not the resources either in gold or labour which the kings of Egypt and Persia can command; we have not armies of slaves or a plebs subservient to our orders; it would be impossible for us to equal or to surpass in extent or riches the public monuments of those countries. It is, therefore, in beauty and excellence of form that the Greeks have attained that superiority which is conceded to them in works of art."

"But what dost thou say about the use of numbers, of which the Egyptians are so fond?"

"In that department the Egyptians have been our teachers; and historical traditions agree in affirming that we have derived from them the methods in use among us for a long time past."

"And so you make use of these methods in the design of your buildings?"

“Certainly, they are prescribed in our schools. The Doric order, for example, which plays so important a part in most of our structures, is subjected to rules determined by certain numerical relations. Not only, however, should I weary you by going into details on the subject, but these are mysteries which our corporations do not allow us to reveal to the uninitiated.”

“Thou art very coy with thy mysteries, Eicos,” said one of the philosophers; “everybody knows them or may know them by measuring a building; it is easy enough, then, to discover these numerical relations.”

“It is not so easy as thou thinkest,” replied Eicos; “for it is necessary first to know at what points these relations are determined. Thus, for example, thou art aware that the shaft of a column is wider at its base than under the echinus of the capital. Well, then! if the height of the column is to be a certain multiple of its diameter, is it at the foot, in the middle, at the upper end, or at the third or fourth part of the shaft that thou wilt take this diameter or modulus?—tell me! Thou canst not answer. . . . If, moreover, I add that in certain cases the modulus will be taken at the base, and in others at the middle or at a third of the height of the shaft, how couldst thou discover the method adopted by the architect of such a building? At any rate, what tedious experiments must be undertaken to solve the questions! Thou hast no little difficulty in learning the character of a child, who in his simplicity does not hide from thee his thoughts, who is like an opened scroll before thee, who obeys all his instincts, and who is always near thee. Thou believest him to be gentle and affectionate; but some day thou discoverest that he is cruel, and that his supposed gentleness is hypocrisy. Thou thoughtest him irritable, yet on a certain occasion he surprised thee by his patience. . . . And yet thou wouldst presume to find

out, measure in hand, how a building has been designed, which is perfectly silent, which neither feels nor manifests any sentiment, but which, in every part of its plan, contains the calculations, the thoughts and sentiments, of a man whom perhaps thou hast never seen !”

“Bravo ! Eicos !” said Chremylus ; “crush this philosopher who presumes to discover the mysteries of thy art ! A crown for the victorious Eicos !”

“Stop a moment ! I have not yet answered our architect, who, like his brethren, pretends to make his art the sanctuary of the most formidable mysteries—the centre of the most exalted intellectual emanations. What dost thou say, Eicos, to this Thessalian apple ?”

“It is beautiful, assuredly, with its carmine skin of that brilliant tint which glows in the cheeks of our country girls when they quicken their steps to be early in the market.”

“Good ! Thou wilt admit that this fruit is wonderfully adapted to satisfy the taste, the smell, the sight, and the touch ; that it is well proportioned as a whole and in its parts ? Now what produced this luxurious pulp so fairly enveloped ?”

“An apple-tree, probably.”

“Very good ; but dost thou think that the apple-tree knowingly calculated the relation of the diameter of this apple, the tension of its soft and shining skin, the number and arrangement of its pips ?”

“Wouldst thou, then, conclude by comparing me to an apple-tree ?”

“Why not ? You architects erect buildings which charm us because you have been planted, cultivated, and grafted to that end ; as a plum-tree to produce plums, a doctor to prepare drugs, and an armourer to make arms. All of you are only intermediate agents of a superior intelligence ; and if thy productions are better than those of any of thy

brethren, it is that thou hast been planted, cultivated, and grafted. But if the apple-tree were to presume to be vain of the apples it produced, we should laugh in its branches."

"An admirable conclusion!" said Epergos smiling; "so Eicos and all of us who think, act, and produce, are only unconscious organisms."

"How dost thou know," continued the philosopher, "that vegetables are unconscious? Thou seest or thinkest thou seest, as Distasis said, that they do not move,—thou dost not hear their voice; what does that prove? At most only the imperfection of thy understanding. The Soul of the World resides in all things; it is equal in value everywhere, only it manifests itself in different ways; the living being itself is only a fragile envelope with which it is pleased to clothe itself in order to attain an end."

"And what is that end?" objected Distasis.

"Well! it is Life—the perpetuity of life; that is something, I fancy! That portion of the soul of the world which is assigned to each being, returns when we are dead to the common reservoir, to be anew employed, as needed and according to its quality; for we may have made that portion worse or better than it was when it was confided to us. . . . When I say, *we*, I mean the apple-tree as well as man, the dog, and the rat.

"Eicos is an excellent architect; he acknowledges that from his birth to this day he has been engaged in acquiring the talent which charms us. But who will assure us that the modicum of the world's soul with which our friend Eicos is endowed, did not begin by occupying the body of a bee, which by superior industry distinguished itself among its kind, and made cells more regular than were those of its companions? Does a bee know what a hexagon is? And why does it always make hexagonal cells?"

"Eicos talks to us now of mysteries in which architects are initiated, of the laws of numbers, and of geometric figures. It is my opinion that those laws were made to fit the facts; as if the bee were now to amuse itself by describing the properties of the hexagon, and how it is composed of six equilateral triangles joined at the apexes. I discern the Soul of the World in the work of the bee, as I discern it in every work of art and in every product of nature. Distasis believes himself alone to be the intelligence that evokes a world which does not really exist; for myself, I see that intelligence everywhere, perpetuating life within matter which exists, but which would be inert without it. And to return to our starting-point, I will put a question to my friend Eicos, if he will allow me."

"By all means."

"Did man invent numbers, or did numbers exist before man? Did man invent the circle, or did the circle exist before man?"

"Numbers," replied Eicos, "exist as geometry exists; all that man has done is to take cognisance of the former, and to apply the other to his requirements, arts, and industrial occupations."

"Good: then if numbers and geometry existed, the deductions from numerical and geometrical relations existed also; for the number twelve was divisible by two, by three, and by four without man's being wanted to demonstrate the fact; therefore all the laws of harmony in numbers existed; and what your architects regard as mysteries, are only borrowings from a common treasury, by those fractions of the Soul of the World which occupy your architects' bodies."

"These are subtleties about which I do not concern myself," returned Eicos. "What I can say is, that the modicum of the Soul of the World which has fallen to

my share has sometimes great trouble in getting out of difficulties, when by the aid of the means afforded us I have to satisfy the caprices of my clients, and my own conceptions of what should be done. I do not think that the apple-tree or even the bees can have these anxieties. I do not, however, the less thank thee for having assigned as my origin the body of one of those deft little workers of Hymettus ; for it was not a very pleasant idea that I began life in the trunk of an apple-tree. But by Bacchus ! I am dying of thirst ; give me something to drink ! ”

Thus passing from one subject to another, the conversation, now serious, now humorous, was prolonged till sunset. Then the guests went into the garden to breathe the cool and fragrant evening air. At night, each of them preceded by a slave carrying a lantern, returned to his abode.

“ A choice set of maniacs ! ” said Doxius to his companion when they were alone in the street.

“ Yes,” replied Epergos—“ beings with a mania for ideas, a mania for discussion, a mania for investigation, a mania for criticism and for the examination of everything. It is a noble frenzy, by all the gods ; thy Persians do not turn up as many ideas in a whole year, through all the city of Babylon, as have been brought under discussion this evening at our friend Chremylus’s.”

“ Assuredly : and they would have the good sense not to suffer it.”

“ So thou thinkest.”

“ Certainly ! is there a single community of men that could make head against this torrent of extravagances, this liberty of saying anything, and discussing everything, unless the magistrates of their state did their best to repress such intellectual licence ? ”

“ Nonsense, Doxius ! this people, with its small territory, and its city equal at most to one of the quarters of

Babylon, will live longer in the memory of men than all thy Persians and Egyptians put together."

"Yes, it may be so,—to pervert their minds, and turn them away from wisdom. What are these philosophers, so highly esteemed in Athens, who have no regard for the gods, or for hallowed traditions, and who are continually calling in question eternal truths and time-honoured beliefs? They are spirits of darkness, destroyers. . . ."

"Come," interrupted Epergos, "none of this antiquated nonsense for me! Thou hast been harping on this string for some thousands of years, yet the world of humanity, whose extinction thou art continually predicting, lives on, develops, and advances."

"It does advance, certainly—over a heap of ruins."

"But my good Doxius, does not the growing forest live on the deposits accumulated at the foot of the young trees, and are they not vigorous in proportion to the age and thickness of those deposits?"

"That decay gives thee satisfaction, then?"

"No; but I turn my gaze to the vigorous shoots that issue from amidst it."



CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ROMANS.

IMMEDIATELY after the civil wars, Rome, under the sway of Augustus, was beginning to undergo a transformation. The taste for luxury and for sumptuous habitations, unknown to the Republic, was spreading among all classes of citizens ; and there was not an *advocatus* or a merchant who did not possess an abode more elegant and spacious than were the patrician dwellings in the time of the Scipios.

Rome, whose population was composed of very diverse elements, was affected by the influence of the arts belonging to the peoples to which she owed her origin, and which she had successively conquered or chosen as allies. Her architecture, Etruscan in its origin, had been gradually enriched by additions from Magna Græcia, Sicily, Attica, and Asia Minor ; accordingly, at the commencement of the imperial era, it exhibited a blending of arts differing in their principles and in their form. Augustus, in whose character moderation prevailed, was of opinion that Rome should be content with the conquests achieved under the Republic, governing the provinces by a wise administration ; and that of these materials combined she should found an impregnable empire, without overstepping limits which he considered as definitively settled.

During the Republican period, Rome had scarcely had leisure to think of the arts, and of the pleasures and com-

fort of which they afford the means. At the conclusion of the Social War, however, a taste for the arts was diffused among the inhabitants of the victorious city. The cities of Samnium Etruria and Lucania, which contained so many magnificent buildings, furnished, on their destruction by Sulla, an immense booty, whose artistic worth and importance exercised a very considerable influence on the character of the Romans.

The treasures of Greece also contributed to imbue the Romans, during the last years of the Republic, with a taste for the arts; and after the wars of Sulla, there was not a Roman citizen of any consideration who was unacquainted with the Greek language, and who did not desire to have in his house some productions of Athenian skill.

The far-sighted policy of Augustus suggested the advantage to be derived from stimulating that growing taste for objects of art which was manifesting itself among the Roman aristocracy; well aware as he was that the habit of luxury is one of the most effective means of holding the upper classes in vassalage. Therefore, although he lived simply himself and continued to inhabit a modest dwelling, he looked with favour on those of the patricians who in their habitations affected a luxury till then unknown, who gathered around them artists and poets, and adopted all the refinements of foreign introduction. He who builds himself a palace and adorns it with costly works of art is not a conspirator. To encourage this movement, the emperor had the temples and public edifices rebuilt on a grander scale and with costly materials. This example was followed by all who were desirous of enjoying the favour of the prince; for they knew that this was the most advantageous mode of paying their court to him.

Not only was the city of Rome changing its appearance, and being covered with sumptuous buildings which

delighted the gaze and occupied the attention of the multitude, but the country districts witnessed the erection of *villæ* which contrasted, by their extent and magnificence, with the country houses of the Romans of the Republic ; these having been usually characterised by extreme simplicity ; as mere centres of farming operations in which luxury had no place.

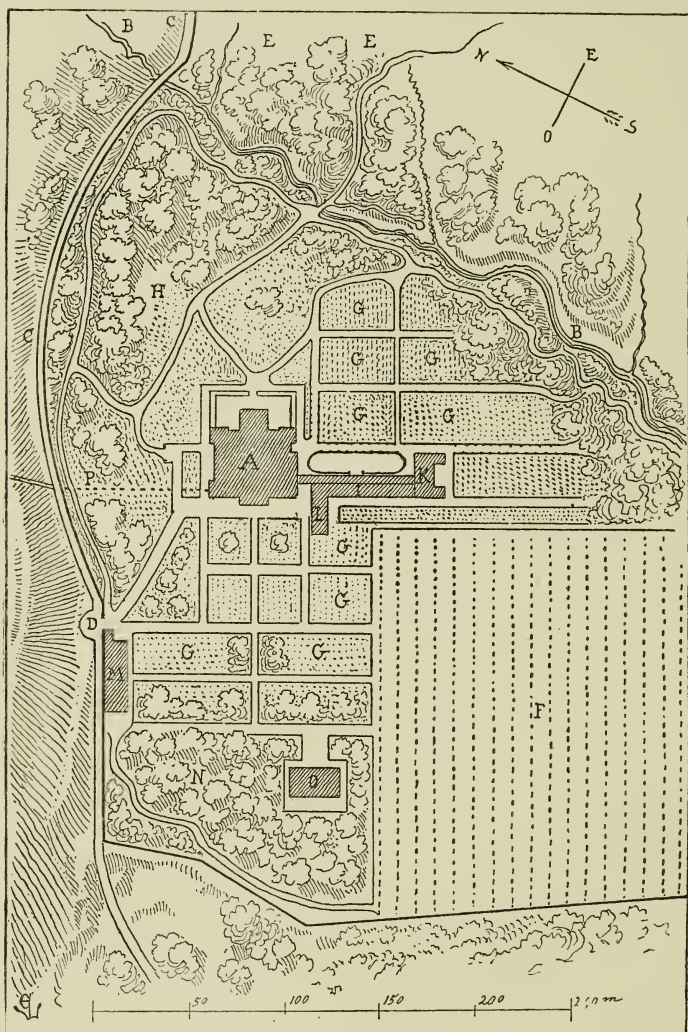
It must be observed, however, that this display of luxury was dictated rather by vanity than by love of Art.

Not far from Rome, on the slope of the mountains which separate ancient Latium from the country of the Volsci, and near a small town called Lanuvium, might be seen at the epoch referred to a *villa* of moderate size, recently built for a certain Mummius, a wealthy patrician. This Mummius, after having played an active part in the civil war, has, like many others, finally selected his party on the strength of those recent events which have invested Augustus with the supreme power ; and withdrawing from public life, he has devoted himself to the tranquil enjoyment of the good things that have fallen to his share.

His *villa* comprises a large extent of land, occupied partly by vineyards and woods, and consisting, in part, of open fields in the plain, cultivated by *coloni*. This beautiful estate, which is watered by the Lanuvius, is approached by the Appian way.

Figure 68 presents the general plan of the villa. The ground rises rather abruptly towards the north-west, so that the principal building A is sheltered from the violent winds coming from the sea, and the keen blasts from the north.

The Lanuvius, which rises at a short distance from the estate, is seen at B, flowing southwards towards the Pontine Marshes. The road, which branches off the Appian way, describes a wide curve at C in order to avoid the sudden



General Plan of Roman Villa.—FIG. 68.

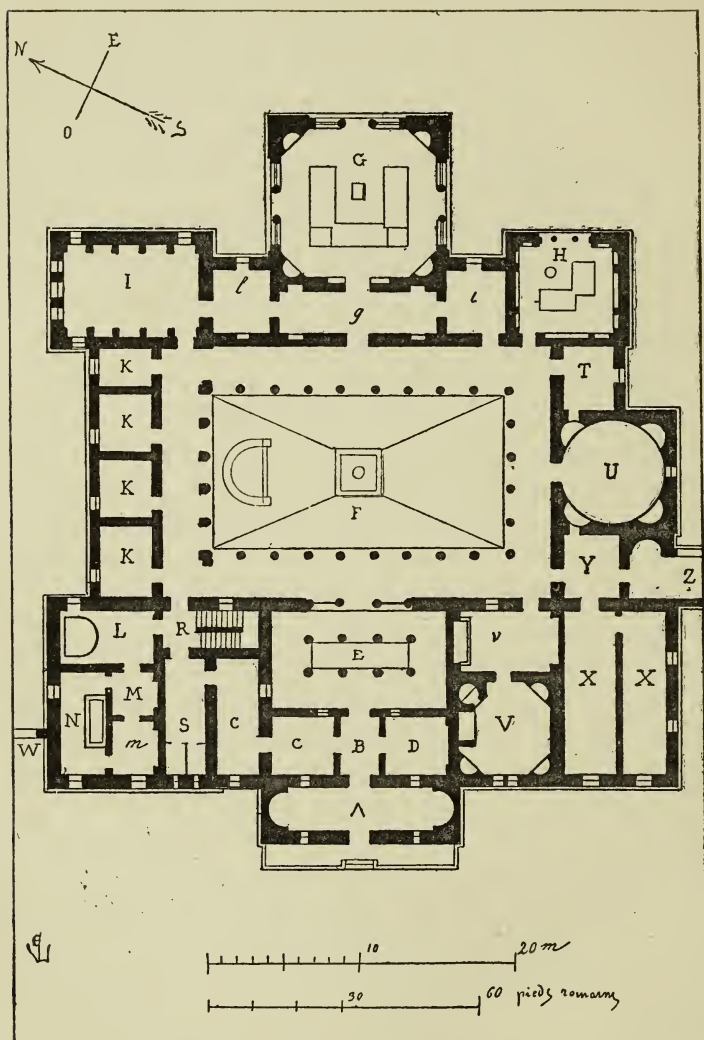
changes of level, and abuts on the enclosed gardens at D. The woodland extends on the north-east side at E as far

as the Appian way, while F is occupied by vines. At G are the orchards and kitchen gardens; the pleasure gardens being at H. From the principal building A, extends a long gallery I, with *xystus* (a covered promenade) to a smaller building K, which serves as a retreat for the proprietor when he wishes to be alone. At I are the quarters for the slaves attached to the service of the house; while those who have the care of the gardens, inhabit the building M, near the entrance-gate. A grove of olive trees extends along the hillside at N, and at O is a small building for the oil and wine presses.

Let us now examine the abode of the proprietor, figure 69. At A is a long vestibule, barrel-vaulted, and by its position adapted for the convenience of visitors awaiting an audience, who may walk about or rest on the benches placed in the two *exedrae* (semicircular rooms or recesses) at the ends. This vestibule is very simply decorated with a few paintings. The entrance B is kept by the porter whose room is at C.

At D is a waiting-room for the accommodation of those who are not introduced into the *atrium* E, with its *impluvium* in the centre. It is there that the clients assemble when they are waiting for the master to accompany him anywhere, or to consult him on their affairs. The great *impluvium* is at F, surrounded with porticos supported by stone columns. In the centre is a basin and fountain surmounted by a bronze statue, and near the north end an *exedra* of white marble looking due south, and where, when the air is cold, persons may rest and converse in the sunshine.

At g, an inner vestibule leads to the great *triclinium* G, in which from fifteen to eighteen guests may be easily accommodated. The small private *triclinium* is at H. At l and i two rooms serve—one for a cloakroom, the other



Plan of the Habitation of Roman Villa.—FIG. 69.

for a pantry. A vaulted library is placed at I; and the room U, also vaulted and receiving light from a circular

orifice contrived in the centre of the hemisphere, serves as a place for family gathering during the heat of the day, being cool and lofty.

At T is a strong-room, in which plate and jewellery are kept. The bed-chambers are at K.

The baths comprise a first room or *frigidarium* L, with a large basin of cold water; next, two rooms M and *m* for hot vapour, and the room N intended for tepid baths.

Over the *frigidarium* is placed the reservoir supplied by the waters of the aqueduct W. At S are the latrines.

The kitchen is placed at V; it is arched, and its octagonal vault is terminated by a flue which carries off the odours and the smoke. The dormitories of the slaves who are specially attached to the service of the proprietor are placed at X X. But several of them are every night on guard in the different parts of the house, and are stationed in the *triclinium*, or under the porticos.

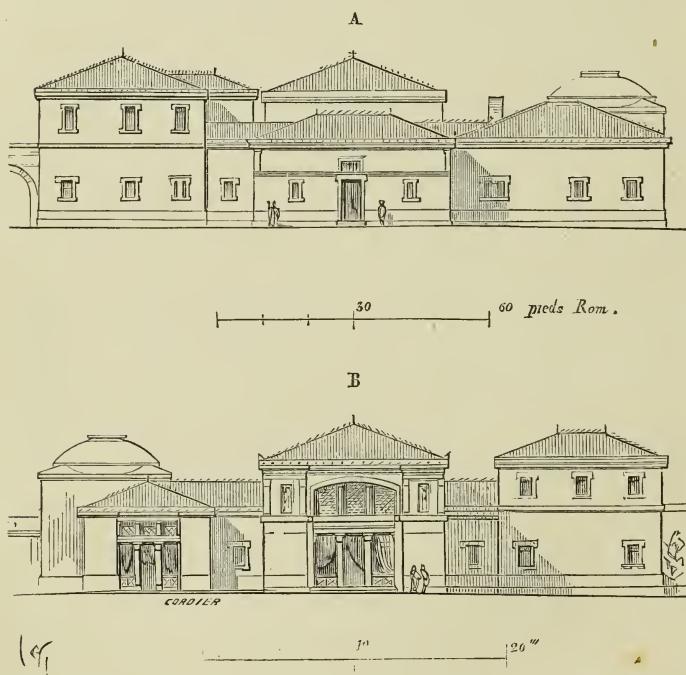
At R are two flights of stairs; one leading down to the cellars, the other ascending to the upper story, which is raised over the whole of the north-west wing. This first floor is occupied by bed-chambers. A fosse cuts off from the garden all the eastern part of the dwelling, on which side are the great and small *triclinia*. Vine-covered trellises screen the alleys along the *xystus*, and in front of the entrance.¹

From the building K, which serves for a retreat, the prospect is delightful. Over the woods, which slope down towards the south, the view comprises nearly the whole course of the Lanuvius which winds among tumbled rocks; beyond, the Pontine Marshes, resembling an immense green carpet dipping into the sea. In the background, the Volscian mountains and the rugged summit of the Circæan promontory. It is during the Saturnalia that

¹ See the General Plan, fig. 68.

the master is most inclined to retire to this little sanctum; for at that time the house is filled with noise and bustle. This building contains a small *triclinium*, a room open towards the south, a small library, and a few bedrooms. The long gallery and the museum afford a covered promenade in bad weather, since the museum is completely shut in on the western side, whence comes the rain and the sea-wind.

Even during the later summer heats there is nothing to

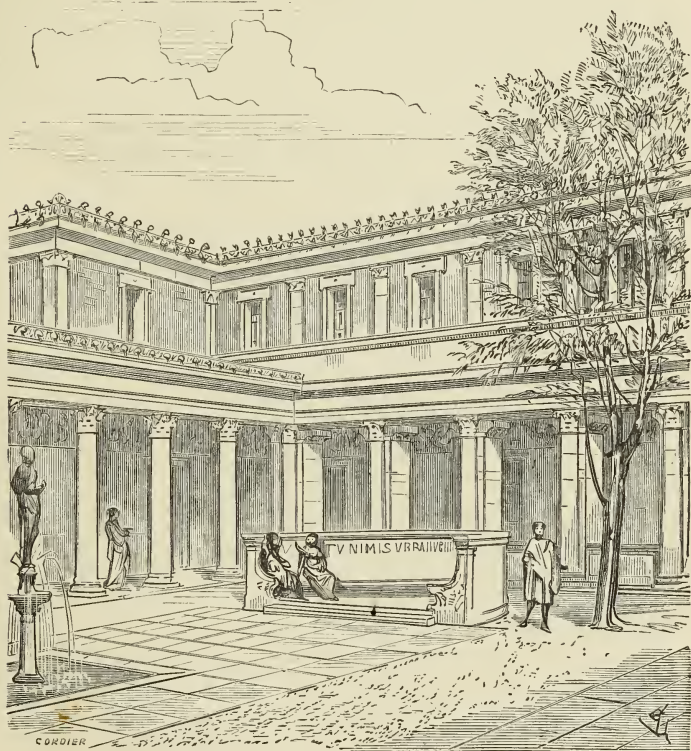


Elevations of Roman Villa.—FIG. 70.

be apprehended from the pernicious air of the Pontine Marshes; for the *villa* is considerably elevated above the plain.

Externally these buildings affect great simplicity, particularly on the entrance side, as the elevation A (fig. 70) shows.

The opposite front B, on which the *triclinium* opens, has more pretension; but Mummius has reserved for the interior all the more striking decorative features of the mansion.



Interior View of Roman Villa. — FIG. 71.

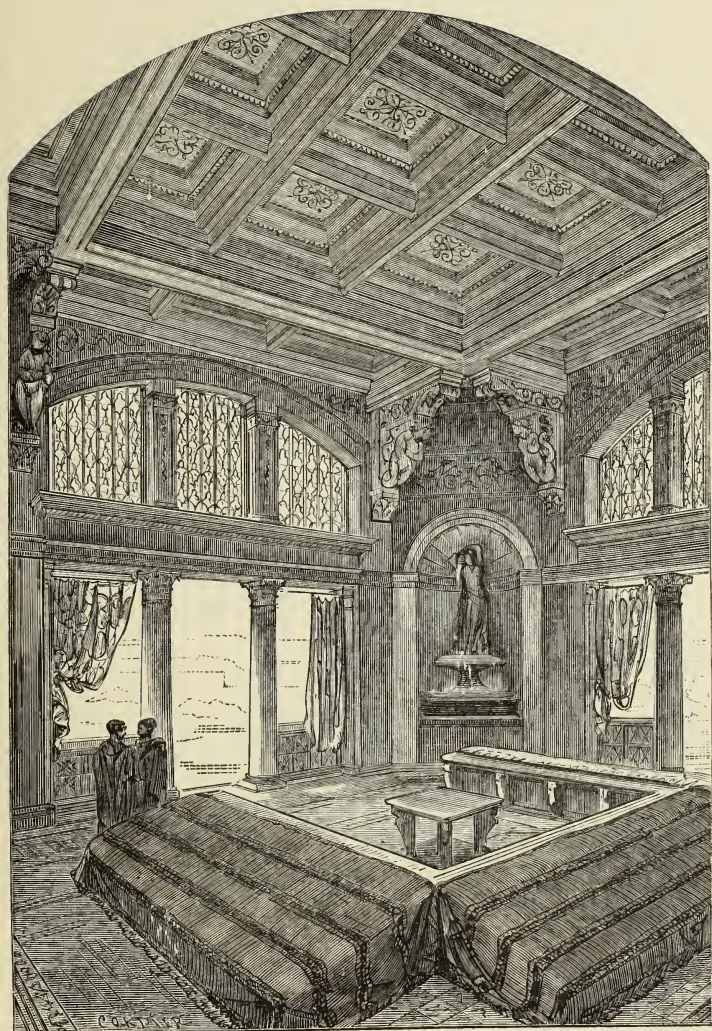
The great court, with its *impluvium* in the centre, and its *exedra*, is one of the parts of the *villa* which presents a particularly attractive appearance (fig. 71). Two aged

laurels, which Mummius has decided on preserving amid these new buildings, afford a little shade in the court, which is, moreover, refreshed by the fountain in the centre. The portico of the north side, having to sustain the story situated above, consists of columns attached to piers terminated by brackets. These piers and columns are of stone, finely coated with stucco coloured red and white; whilst the walls at the back of the portico are covered with painting in which dark tones predominate. The entablatures are, in like manner, made of stone stuccoed and painted. All the walls are of brick, with coloured stuccos outside and inside.

The large *triclinium* and library are certainly the finest parts of this villa. This *triclinium* (fig. 72) commands the country on three sides, through three large arched openings divided by marble columns surmounted by their entablature and by pilasters. All the upper part of these openings above the entablature, is closed with extremely fine trellis-work of bronze, filled in with coloured glass. Eight large brackets of carved wood support, at the corners, a wooden ceiling covered with paintings of a subdued tone. The mosaic pavement is most carefully executed, and all the walls are adorned with paintings. On the four narrow sides of the octagon are left niches, each of which contains a statue of a nymph, pouring water into a porphyry basin.

In bad weather the openings between the columns are closed with thick curtains. But the aspect of this hall shelters it from the disagreeable winds, as well as from the excessive heat of the sun; the *villa* being also sheltered by the mountain on the north side.

Mummius having almost completely withdrawn from public life, pays only very short visits to Rome, and passes the greater part of the year in his Lanuvian *villa*, devoting



TRICLINIUM OF ROMAN VILLA.—FIG. 72.

[To face page 234.]

himself to study and the chase, and entertaining a few chosen friends there. At less than two hours' distance is Antium, whence all kinds of supplies can be procured,—fish, spices, and commodities from every quarter ; so that all the conveniences of life are readily obtained, and only a moderate staff of slaves is required.

The relations kept up by Mummius with friends in Greece have enabled him to collect in his library and museum Greek manuscripts, statues, and pictures, of which he is a great amateur ; and a portion of his means is devoted to the acquisition of these works of art. It is, moreover, a fashion with the Roman aristocracy thus to collect the marbles, pictures, and manuscripts which Athens continually produces, and for which the Romans pay pretty dearly.

Mummius has in his employ a Greek freedman, who instructs his children, acts as his secretary, and takes care of his collections.

This freedman, whose name is Caustis, is an intelligent young man who has ingratiated himself with Mummius by his satirical impromptus apropos of everything ; for Mummius, like most persons who have retired from public life after having taken an active part in it, is inclined to criticise the present state of affairs, and likes to be surrounded by censors whose conversation does not spare the favourites of fortune. Caustis, who is often sent to Rome on business, reports to his patron the news of the great city, the topics of conversation among the senators, and the epigrams uttered by the populace ; and loud and long is the merriment that ensues.

Mummius thus avoids those melancholy humours which, as he thinks, solitude usually induces in minds long habituated to active life.

Caustis knows everybody in Rome, and is welcomed everywhere ; because he makes it his business, while flattering the

persons in whose company he happens to be, to depreciate others; and this with a grace and address that disarm resentment. This freedman is very intimate with Epergos and Doxius, who are at present settled in Rome; and when these three meet at the tavern when Caustis visits the city, there is interminable talk about the past and the present, about Greece and Rome. At heart Caustis is a thorough Greek, and beneath his perpetual banter is concealed a profound hatred of the Romans; a hatred of whose extent he himself is perhaps not aware, but which seizes every opportunity of showing up the oddities, the weaknesses, the pretensions, and the vices of the "great nation."

On a certain evening, Epergos—who had divined the hidden feelings of his acquaintance, at the commencement of their intimacy—after having let him pour out his whole heart, began to talk earnestly to him, and to speak of the brilliant days of Athens, and the genius of her people—of the rank it had achieved in the domains of intellect, of its influence in the world, and, lastly, of its faults, the cause of its misfortunes. During this discourse Caustis was silently weeping, for Epergos had deeply probed the ever-open wound which the poor Greek had for years concealed beneath a flow of raillery; and from that moment these two were united in a close friendship which the unrelenting bitterness of Doxius only served to increase.

Doxius, who found himself very much out of his element in this world of perpetual progress, having been a witness of the decay, one after another, of those powers which he had so long considered as the guardians of order, in the direction of human affairs,—the Assyrian and Persian empires, and the dynasties of Egypt, which had been regarded by him as the supreme embodiment of wisdom,—had conceived an admiration for the Romans, whose uniform administration, unyielding though protective rule,

colossal works, and great strength—for Doxius was always disposed to side with the strongest,—seemed to him the ultimate and only form of well-being among men. He was, therefore, little disposed to laugh at the sallies of Caustis, when he was exposing any of the plague-spots on the body of Roman greatness. Then would ensue interminable discussions, in which the wit of Caustis would call forth bursts of laughter, in spite of the predictions of Doxius on the fatal influence of the critical spirit of those incorrigible Greeks.

The freedman had spoken to Mummius of his two friends, and of the pleasant hours they had passed together, of the extensive knowledge of Epergos and the crotchets of Doxius; so that the proprietor had a desire to see them. They were therefore invited to go to the *villa*.

From Rome it was but a three hours' ride on horseback, and they reached it on a fine spring morning, by the Appian Way, which was bordered with tombs as far as half the way to Albano.

Caustis took them to the rooms which had been prepared for them on the ground-floor near the library; and about mid-day, Mummius received them with the urbanity of a well-bred Roman. After the siesta which followed the repast, he showed them all the parts of his *villa*, not omitting a single detail; and when the heat of the day was over, they sat in the shade of the great *triclinium* to enjoy the landscape, which was exquisitely beautiful on that side, and to converse while waiting for the evening meal.

"So then," said Mummius, "it is thy opinion that my *villa* will compare with the rural habitations which thou hast seen in thy travels through Greece and Italy."

"Assuredly, Mummius," answered Epergos, "thou hast built a beautiful residence, pleasant and convenient, worthy

both of a patrician and a philosopher who loves study, and in which life should pass tranquilly and agreeably."

"And what sayest thou of my museum,—thou who hast traversed Greece, Asia, and Egypt?"

"If thou wilt pardon a candid answer, Mummius, I will confess that I have not yet been able to reconcile myself to that love for collections of works of art which is so much in vogue in the cultivated class of Roman society. I like to see works of art in their proper place; so that when I find them thus assembled in a gallery, my thoughts involuntarily recur to the buildings from which they must have been carried off."

"Wait a moment, Epergos; all the objects which thou hast seen were either given me or were purchased by me: Caustis can tell thee what they have cost me, for it was he who succeeded in getting them, or who went to buy them for me."

"Very true!" said Caustis. "Can any one charge Mummius with despoiling the buildings of Greece of works of art when the Athenians themselves were the first to remove them from their place with a view to selling them at Rome? If Mummius had not bought them, they would have been in the possession of some other patrician; we may as well see them here as elsewhere."

"That does not affect my remark," returned Epergos. "Forcibly carried off, or adroitly abstracted by covetous hands, and bought by enlightened amateurs, the result is the same. The place for which these works of art were made is deprived of them. That which used to charm me in Greece was the taste with which the temples, habitations, and public buildings were embellished.

These edifices, even in the minutest details, appeared to form a whole so well composed that nothing could be taken away or added without destroying the general harmony.

If you saw a statue, you might have supposed that it had formed itself in the very place it occupied, and would have thought it monstrous to replace it by anything else. I might say the same of the smallest ornament. These Greek edifices, of all orders, might be compared to those trees in our orchards which produce the fruits proper to their kind—whilst museums always affect me more or less like the sight of a fruit-stall where the finest products of the gardens are carefully arranged, but separated from the branch that bore them. I prefer the sight of an orchard to that of a fruit-stall,—that is all. This, however, does not prevent me from admiring beautiful fruits systematically arranged on shelves.”

“Certainly,” said Caustis ; “the great point is not to put pumpkins by the side of almonds.”

“Thou art severe, Epergos,” resumed Mummius ; “should we then let so many priceless works which no longer fulfil their destined use be allowed to be lost, or to fall into unworthy hands ? Is it not better to collect them for the study and admiration of connoisseurs ?”

“Yes,” added Caustis ; “and observe, Epergos, that the enemies of Rome succeeded so far as to prevent many objects of art from having any other asylum. By refusing to recognise the advantages offered by the Roman power, by having the presumption to withdraw themselves from its protecting laws, these enemies, contemptible or formidable, sometimes drew down upon their cities chastisements too well deserved. As soon as order was restored, Rome was eager to collect so many precious objects with a view to hand them down to future generations. What a wealth of art did the victories of Sulla over the Italiotes, who rebelled against their own interests, bring to Rome,—treasures which would have remained buried in miserable country towns, if Rome had not given them the most

munificent hospitality ! And—to return to thy comparison—which is better,—to let the fruit decay on the tree, or to gather it in time to preserve it and to enjoy it at leisure ? ”

“ I cannot say,” returned Epergos ; “ but trees yield new fruits every year : is it the same with nations, which for a moment in their existence seem capable of producing works of art,—after which the pure and abundant sap which nourished them dries up or is corrupted ? ”

“ Come now ! ” interrupted Caustis ; “ wilt thou assert that the Athenians, who under Pericles were building the Parthenon and carving its metopes, its friezes, and the tympanums of its pediments, are no longer capable of producing works of art quite as beautiful ? Have they not studios that are not able to keep up with the demand for works of art on the part of rich Romans who order Phidiases and pay for them in solid gold ? Well ; there is a plentiful supply, now-a-days, of these works of Phidias ; and the most accomplished connoisseurs do not know the difference. Has not the wealthy Licinius a gallery quite filled with them, and does he not consider them superior to the friezes of the Parthenon ? Well : it is my friend Xantippus, a sculptor at Athens, who lives behind the theatre of Bacchus, that made those bas-reliefs, and who will be most happy to sell thee as many as thou wishest to buy.”

“ However, don’t go and tell Licinius that, for he would never forgive me ! ”

“ But,” said Mummius, “ thou dost not open thy mouth, Doxius ; what is thy opinion about museums ? ”

“ I think,” replied Doxius, “ that works of art tend more to corrupt men than to improve them, and that the Romans would have done well to let all those works of art from Greece, which they are so eager in collecting, stay where they were. I did not observe that these glorious achievements of art, which Epergos so much admires, were useful

to the Athenians, or put them in the way of governing themselves discreetly. I could never bring myself to find amusement in those Greek comedies in which the Gods are scoffed at and made to figure in ridiculous actions. Epergos used to think this amusing. Such things would never have been tolerated among the Egyptians ; so their dynasties lasted for thousands of years, whereas the glory of Athens lasted scarcely a century."

"Oh!" said Caustis, "if we enter on the Egyptian chapter with Doxius, it is all over with us ; do pray stop him, Mummius ; he is going to enumerate all the dynasties ; he will prove to us that the successors of Alexander were incapable of conferring any benefit on the land of crocodiles, and that the Greeks brought trouble there as they have done wherever they have gone."

"That is only too true," replied Doxius ; "Egypt saw its decline beginning the very day that its country was opened to the Greeks, under the twenty-sixth dynasty."

"Did not I tell you so?—We are lucky that Doxius spares us the first twenty-five."

"Upon my word, Caustis, is there anything for the Greeks to be proud of in having founded the thirty-second dynasty in Egypt, ending with Cleopatra?"

"What would have become of Egypt, in fact, if Octavius had not put a stop to the freaks of that daughter of the Ptolemies?" responded Caustis. "Besides was not this also the occasion of adding to our spoils? But—apropos of these Egyptian spoils—would they in thy opinion, Doxius, have the same corrupting influence on Rome, as thou attributest to the works of Greece?—it would be a sad pity if the art productions of that nation of sages were as detrimental to morals as those of a nation of fools! Come! Mummius, order me to put all thy museum into carts and throw it into the sea ; I really feel that this range of

bronze and marble busts, these statues, bas-reliefs, pictures, and furniture inlaid with ivory, are corrupting us to the very marrow of our bones !”

“Thou art in thy usual vein, Caustis ; but I would ask our host whether it was by spending its time in making works of art that Rome conquered the world. Rome was originally neither more powerful nor more extensive than was Athens. Rome was not thinking about working marble or casting bronzes ; its entire people did not spend whole days in criticising or praising this or that building from which the scaffolding and hoardings were being removed. Rome did not applaud stage-players who ridiculed the gods and the most respectable citizens. Rome employed its strength in forging arms and ploughshares ; it was not cumbered with idle poets and philosophers talking nonsense about everything. Its orators occupied the attention of the people only with the interests of the republic, and did not pass their time discussing subjects which it is forbidden to man to fathom ; and so Rome has always been increasing, has risen again more vigorous after every disaster, and has ultimately given laws to every nation known. Its name has been respected everywhere, and there is not a nobler title upon earth than that of Roman citizen. I ask our sarcastic friend Caustis, what the Athenians have accomplished. Anarchy ceased to prevail among them only to be replaced by tyranny. For a moment it was possible to imagine that they would become the head of a great nation. But it was only for a moment. A prey to fits of vanity, they undertook foolish and ruinous wars ; and all their intelligence did not hinder them from being duped by Philip and accepting the protection of Alexander. Certainly, during this period, they were producing marvellous works of art ; they were the centre of attraction to youth in love with novelty ; they were flattered, admired, and treated as

spoiled children incapable of behaving themselves, until the moment when Rome said to them : ' You are troubling the world : be quiet ! ' Why then should Rome go in quest of the playthings which have amused these children and enticed them away from serious things ?—Say ! Mummius."

"Wilt thou allow me to answer him, Mummius ?" said Caustis.

"The challenge is addressed to thee as much as any one ; answer it."

"True ; and I confess myself nonplussed," replied Caustis ; "the Athenians are big children, who allow themselves to be deluded by dreams which vanish before reality as the snow beneath the vernal sun. The Macedonians and, at a later period, the Romans, taught them how government ought to be carried on ; they silenced their philosophers, their pamphleteers, and their street orators, who were disquieting the world with their theories, their satire, and their clamours. And all would have been very well if these people, who know so well how to keep others in order, had not allowed themselves to be enslaved at home. After all, however, this may be quite to thy liking, Doxius—since the senate approves it. It is so vastly convenient to live at ease, confiding the entire management of the commonwealth to a dictator. His alone are the incessant anxieties, the unrest, the responsibilities of government. It is a genius, a god, or at least a descendant of the gods, who deigns to take charge of our interests ; what can we do better than entrust ourselves to his divine guidance !" Mummius smiled, and Caustis continued : "The Romans have said to the Greeks, and to many other nations : ' Have done with your quarrels and discussions ; they hinder honest people from sleeping. The world was not made to be troubled by your clamours and disputes. Here are our legions, our laws, and proconsuls who, from

this time forth, will take care to make you behave yourselves.' One fine day, however, three men said to the Romans themselves: 'Let us have done with these intestine dissensions, these cabals and conspiracies against the commonwealth, these firebrands of tribunes and this restless and ambitious oligarchy. The gods sent you Julius,—a genius; you have assassinated him. Go home and be quiet.' Then these three men fell out with each other, and the cleverest, or the most fortunate of the three, suppressed the two others and secured the government to himself. So that the Roman people, which gives law to the world, is in the hands of a single man who imposes his individual will upon it. It is an admirable arrangement, since everybody knows that Octavius is a demi-god. But just suppose it should happen that this demi-god, who is, alas! mortal, should descend into the realm of Pluto, and that a lunatic should take his place. The Roman people and the whole earth would be in the power of a madman!—a pretty state of things; what dost thou say about it, Doxius?"

"I say that the gods designate the men whose right it is to govern the nations, and that thy hypothesis is inadmissible."

"But if perchance the gods should forget to trouble themselves about what takes place within the walls of Rome on the day when Octavius submits to the lot of mortals."

"The gods never forget: thou art trifling, Caustis."

"I beg your pardon, wise Doxius; they forgot to protect Cæsar, and to ward off from his breast the swords of his assassins; yet they might easily have done so."

"Thou canst not fathom their decrees."

"It is precisely because I cannot fathom their decrees, that I imagine the possibility of an insane emperor succeeding the divine Augustus; perhaps, in fact, the gods intend

to indulge in this caprice only to show the Romans that it is imprudent to entrust the affairs of the republic to an individual, and to presume to govern fools while they themselves are governed by a madman or a blockhead."

"A capital answer, Caustis," said Mummius, who retained the old republican leaven in the recesses of his heart ; "but let us drop a discussion which would lead us too far. But tell me candidly, Epergos, whether our *villæ* appear to thee superior or inferior to buildings of the same kind in Greece."

"It is very difficult to answer, Mummius : first, because the Greeks do not construct private buildings of such pretensions ; and secondly, because the present works as they are generally executed, under Roman inspiration and for Romans, do not differ sensibly from building constructions in Italy. Formerly the houses of the wealthiest Athenians were, as compared with our *villæ*, very small and extremely simple outside ; pretending to no other attractions but the delicate beauty of some parts of the interior. A little sculpture, painting of an inobtrusive kind and carefully executed, a well-considered and rational system of construction, with a few works of art in exquisite taste, and exactly in the place suited for them, formed the decoration of these dwellings. The Athenian was accustomed to live out of doors, and only went home to take his meals with his family and a few intimate friends, or to pass the night. He had, therefore, no need of galleries, vast courts, great porticos, and spacious halls such as these. The ancient dwellings of the Athenians, therefore, cannot be compared with these. But in ancient Campania and in Sicily, houses are still built which remind one of those of Attica, except that there is not the same delicate discretion in the use of art. The Romans like pomp and grandeur ; their taste for art, properly so called, is an importation ;

that taste is not in their blood, as is shown by the fact that they employ Greek artists whenever they wish to give to their dwellings the aroma of art. I can have no doubt, Mummius, that it was a Greek who was selected by thee to build thy porticos and arrange the details of thy villa."

"That is true ; but it was I who prescribed the plan."

"I can well understand that : the Romans are expert in matters relating to general arrangements, and even construction ; but when they have planned the building they call in a Greek to decorate it. Thus in all your public buildings as also in your houses, what belongs to the Romans can be always distinguished from that which is due to the intervention of the Greek artist. Whereas during the period of Athenian prosperity, the public buildings as well as the houses, both in their *ensemble* and their details, form a harmonious whole which was so complete that it was impossible to distinguish the structure from the decoration."

"So that," interrupted Caustis, "if the Romans do not take care, the Greeks will impose their arts on the masters of the world."

"Not at all !" replied Epergos ; "the Greeks have never adopted vaulting, and the Romans will not abandon their architectural method, which is so well adapted for buildings on the large scale. Whatever orders or decorations in their particular taste the Greeks may lavish on the exterior or interior of the gigantic masses erected by the Romans, they will never be able to rob them of the Roman physiognomy and character. Is it possible that the rotunda which Agrippa is building for his Thermæ can ever come to resemble a Greek edifice?—though Greek artists are working at the grand Corinthian portico in front of it. Wouldst thou in fact, Caustis, have me express my full conviction on the subject?—Greek art cannot be transplanted ; everywhere else but in Attica it will show a stunted

growth, or will become a monstrosity. The art which truly belongs to a people cannot develop itself elsewhere than on the soil from which it sprung, and under the conditions that produced it. Hast thou observed the two or three Greek temples which they have recently taken it into their heads to build in Egypt? They are not inferior in beauty or in any other respect to those which are built in Greece; yet, in presence of the Egyptian monuments, nothing could be more ridiculous. A similar result would ensue if any one should take a fancy to build in Rome a temple in the style of those of Thebes. Let us leave things in the place in which they originated."

"It is a long time, Epergos," observed Doxius, "since thou hast said anything so sensible."

"Not quite so fast! I know what thou wouldst insinuate, and thou wouldst make me contradict myself. *I say*: 'Let us leave things in the place where circumstances have caused them to originate, but let us have the sense to take advantage of what these things teach us.' For example, the Romans found in Asia many architectural elements which have enabled them, in combination with what they already possessed from Etruria, to make those noble vaulted constructions which we admire; evidently they have acted wisely in taking advantage of these different elements, because, when we examine the matter thoroughly we shall find that these elements are intimately related to each other; but where I cannot approve the judgment of the Romans so much, is in their attempting to unite the Greek architrave with the Asiatic vaults. These are contrary principles which can never be harmonised in an architectural work. If the Greeks should some day come to impose a style of art on the Romans, as they could no longer adopt the architrave, which allows of only small constructions, we should find that, considering the logical

tendency of their minds, not being able to dispense with the vault, they would abandon the lintel once for all ; and they would be right in so doing."

Mummius found pleasure in the conversation of his guests, and kept them several days at his *villa*. But Epergos was not very fond of remaining long in the same place.

He wanted to visit some large Roman colonies, to see how the veterans, mingled with people of various origins, lived in the midst of barbarians. As for Doxius, his desire was to return into Asia—to that vast empire of the Persians now dismembered. He had been assured that there at least no sensible change had taken place for centuries. While Epergos was attracted towards what was new, Doxius, on the other hand, was equally disposed to seek for that fixed immutable point which he imagined must exist somewhere to enlighten feeble humanity with its steady illumination. They, therefore, took leave of Mummius and returned to Rome ; where Caustis, with the permission of his patron, accompanied them and remained some hours longer with them till the moment of their departure.

Before going to dine at the tavern, Caustis wished to show his two friends some of the quarters of Rome little frequented by strangers, and which Epergos and Doxius had not had leisure to visit.

"You think you know Rome," said the freedman, "because you have visited its temples, its public buildings, its Forum, and some of its finest thoroughfares. Well ! it is only the ornamental side of Rome that strangers are accustomed to see. But there is an old Rome which the divine Augustus has not been able to visit with the hammer of destruction. Old Rome,—where some large houses belonging to the patricians still remain standing, though they take good care not to live in them now, but let them to tenants ; and where may be found

buildings of all ages, in every form of confusion and superposition along narrow and tortuous alleys. This mass of buildings, for the most part of a mean and squalid appearance, is inhabited by dealers of all nations. Jews, Egyptians, Greeks, Armenians, and merchants from the Adriatic, may be seen there. The streets swarm with traders speaking all known languages. The houses reach as high as five stories, and are inhabited from top to bottom. It was from these quarters that, in the times of the republic, those swarms of vagrants issued, who on certain occasions filled the precincts of the Forum or the Campus Martius, intent on mischief."

The three friends then went to visit the thoroughfares which surround the Theatre of Pompey, and which the *Ædiles* had the greatest difficulty in rendering even tolerably passable. At some points the goods piled in front of the shops nearly blocked up the street. Elsewhere waggons were unable to pass, and the brawling was incessant. Itinerant dealers in fish or fruit were crying their wares with deafening vociferation. Most of the houses, built of wood or brick, overhung the thoroughfare, and would have embraced their opposite neighbours but for the timber props that kept them upright.

Doxius sighed, thinking of the streets of the Egyptian cities, whose houses, of no great height and for the most part having only a ground-floor, closed on the outside, and interspersed with courts and little gardens, had an appearance of order and tranquillity which singularly contrasted with the deafening hubbub of this human ant's nest. Epergos recalled the streets of Athens which were also narrow and crowded; but which were bordered by small neat houses with lively colours glowing in the sunlight, and of so cheerful an aspect, even in the poorest quarters.

And what a difference in the two populations! The

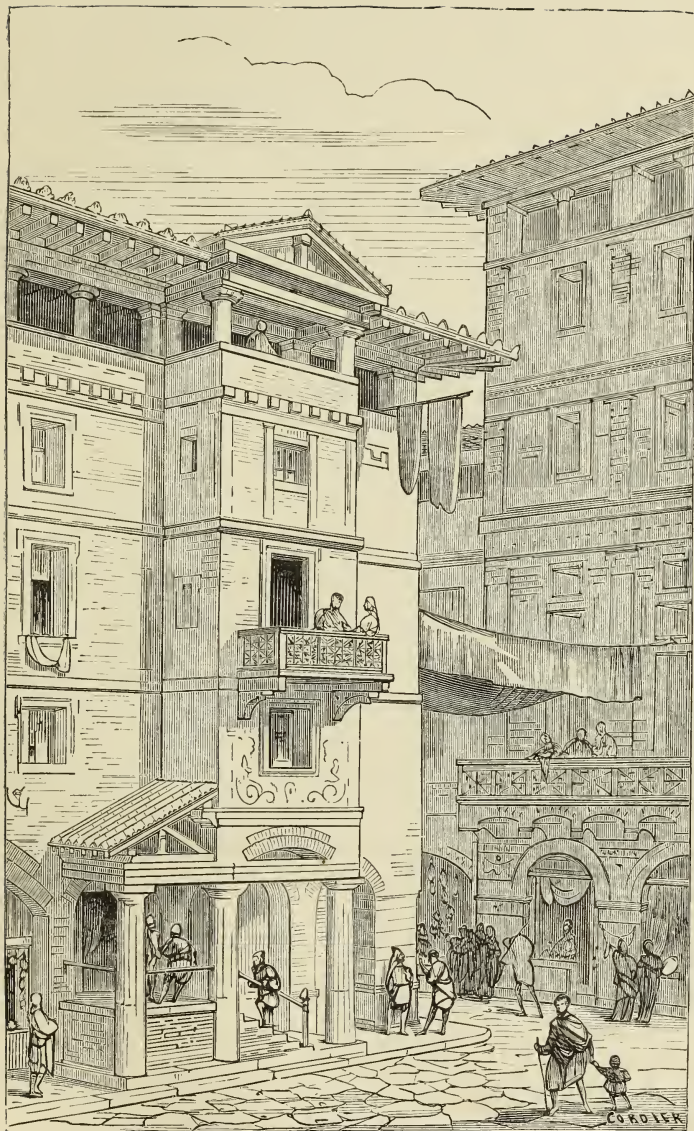
remembrance which Epergos cherished of the pleasant moments passed in listening to the jokes of the Athenian populace, which were always truly humorous and improvised, and the facetious sallies of the peasants coming to sell their vegetables and fowls, made the brutality of this Roman populace shocking by contrast. He could scarcely understand the talk of these people who were jostling each other with anxious looks, for they spoke all kinds of corrupt dialects. Soon wearying of the scene, the three friends entered a tavern situated at the corner of one of the five centres of this populous quarter. On their right arose one of those lofty houses with several stories raised one over another, presenting a gloomy aspect on the whole, notwithstanding the rich balcony in front of the windows of the first story. Opposite the tavern a house of less dismal appearance formed the corner of the street (fig. 73).

While the repast ordered by the freedmen was being prepared, Epergos was contemplating this house with curiosity, and seeking to understand the various elements of which it was composed.

"It appears, my good friend," said Caustis to him, "that the house of Balbus has a special power of attracting thy attention. For the building thou art looking at is none other than the first habitation of Cornelius Balbus the friend of Cæsar. Since his elevation, as I need scarcely tell thee, he no longer lives here."

"But what a singular *mélange* of architecture," observed Epergos.

"Singular indeed. It was formerly not unusual in Rome to put the lowest step of the stairs of a house in the street, as here, allowing the erection of a covered porch slightly raised above the ground, and beneath which the clients used to wait. Recently the Ædiles have prohibited these projections because they obstruct the thoroughfare.



Street View in Old Rome.—FIG. 73.

“If thou shouldst ask me whence come these columns of stone which surround these steps, I must reply that I have no idea ; but that they were certainly not made for the purpose they now serve. They are brought from some building that has been destroyed. Thou wilt often observe appropriations of this kind in the houses of the old quarters of the city that have undergone many changes. The fronts were originally quite covered with painted stucco ; at this day we find only traces of it.

“The building is composed in great measure of debris collected from all quarters. This balcony, for instance, with its balustrade of white marble, so finely worked, and whose origin must be looked for on the shores of Asia. By the side of this highly finished work, remark that third story with its projecting bay constructed in simple fashion with timber framing. Then look above at the garret corridor supported by small marble columns, that seem to have come from Greece. Oh ! I assure you the Romans are not very fastidious in such matters ! they take what suits their purpose wherever they find it ; and there is not a merchant galley that does not bring as ballast from Egypt, Greece, or Asia, some columns or fragments, which they can sell at a very good price to the bourgeois who are having houses built. The mason manages to put them into the building, and each party gains something by the transaction ; those who demolish some old building no longer in use, to sell its remains, the merchant who buys them, the bourgeois who pays for them, and the gaping idler who stares at them.”

“In fact, it is only the artist who designed the building thus destroyed who has any reason to complain, and those perhaps who admired it.”

“Oh ! as to that, the artist died long ago, and what is now most admired is hard cash. Greece itself—Greece so

proud of its public monuments—sells them in fragments and by auction to Roman brokers ; and if, perchance, an earthquake destroys one of her temples once held in such veneration, you will see the municipal authorities bestirring themselves, not to restore it, but to sell the ruins to the highest bidder ; and in default of earthquakes they help the building to fall if its vitality is too persistent. This is an important branch of Greek commerce now-a-days—together with the reproduction of the *chef d'œuvres* of Phidias, Praxiteles, and their compeers.”

“ But the gods who were worshipped in those temples,—what do they say of this traffic ? ”

“ Epergos, my good friend, there is scarcely any other god but one—that is the great, the incomparable Plutus. Aristophanes used to say so at Athens even in his time, and things are much worse now.”

“ It may be so at Athens, perhaps, and I am not surprised at it,” said Doxius : “ but Rome has a sense of respect for the Deities, and scrupulously observes the sacred rites.”

“ Doubtless, doubtless,” replied Caustis ; “ but some gods are gone out of fashion even in Rome ; and the Roman does not greatly concern himself as to whether the columns or friezes which he buys to adorn his dwelling are from a temple or a portico.” The three friends did not separate till night, when each went his way.



CHAPTER XIX.

NORTHERN SYRIA.

MORE than three centuries had passed away, and the seat of Roman empire had been established at Byzantium, in the midst of those Greek, Phrygian, Bithynian, and Lydian populations which were formerly on the confines of the Roman possessions, but which had then become the heart of the colossus. Rome believed that it had no more to fear from the Germans beyond the Danube; but the eastern provinces were continually increased by the dense masses of barbarians who occupied all the countries to the north of the Euxine. Byzantium was the key of Asia Minor, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Palestine; and the Lower Danube formed a line easy to defend. The Empire therefore sought to secure its power for all time to come by abandoning Rome and settling on the shores of the Bosphorus.

Ever since the emperors had been installed at Byzantium, the trade between the Persian Gulf and the coasts of the Ægean had vastly increased. Caravans were incessantly traversing the long route which, ascending the Tigris, passed by Hatra, Tharrana, Edessa, Hierapolis, Antioch, and the shores of the gulf of Issus. There the merchandise they brought was embarked in ships, which transported it to Constantinople. Other caravans coming from Arabia or Egypt traversed Palestine and also reached Antioch by way of Damascus, Emesa, and Chalcis. Now the country situated between the Upper Euphrates—that is to say, be-

tween Hierapolis, Chalcis, and Antioch, is an arid region ; for during several months of the year, it is watered only by a single stream—the Chalcis—which empties itself into a lake near a city of the same name. At the end of summer it remains almost dry. Nevertheless, to supply the wants of the numerous caravans which traversed the country, many small towns had been erected on this ungrateful soil, and enjoyed a degree of prosperity ; for they supplied themselves with provisions from Antioch and sold their commodities at a high price to the travelling merchants. Of agriculture there was scarcely a trace in this part of northern Syria ; and only a few herds of ill-fed cattle found a scanty pasture during the winter and spring.

The population was partly of Syrian, but predominantly of Greek origin—and it was Greek that was spoken between Antioch and the Upper Euphrates.

Doxius considered the Christians as disturbers of the Empire, and approved of the persecutions to which they had been subjected under the reigns of certain emperors ; blaming the latter for not having exterminated at one blow a sect which he deemed abominable, and which was tending to nothing short of the destruction of Roman society. When he understood that Constantine was abandoning Paganism, he thought that the Western world was approaching the most frightful cataclysm the world had ever seen ; and with his heart full of sorrow he returned to his dear Egypt, hoping that its population at least would not allow itself to be hurried towards the abyss. His disappointment was great, and Alexandria seemed to him worse than Athens. Of that ancient order of things, political and religious, which he had so much admired, there remained not a trace. The Greeks took the lead, but at their side were to be found sects religious and philosophical without number. Everything was subjected to discussion, and the

people seemed to him struck with vertigo. Epergos was pleased with Alexandria, and when Doxius intimated his intention to return to Asia, he had great trouble in inducing him to accompany him. However, the disappointment of his companion amused him, and he did not wish to leave him alone. Both took the road to Babylon, and on the way Doxius had abundance of time to discourse on the approaching fall of the communities of the West, and the glorious future reserved for the nations who had the sense to preserve the principles of authority and respect for traditions, and who did not waste their time in idle discussions about everything.

"But," responded Epergos, "I think I remember that while we were among the Ninevites at the epoch of their glory, thou didst accuse me of urging them to the application of things that were then new. Thou canst not but remember a visit we paid to the palace of the king. Vaulting was in question, and thou gavest me a complete demonstration that the erection of those gigantic constructions, at the cost of thousands of human lives, was an abuse of the power accruing to certain men over their fellows."

"I did not approve those things then, and I do not approve them now ; and in view of the deluge of new ideas that is overwhelming the West, the vertigo that seems to have seized on those nations, and the calamities that arise from it, I maintain that the principle of uncontested authority, and an absolute respect for tradition, are still preferable to that love of change which has taken possession of the Western world, and of which those detestable Greeks were the first promoters."

"The admiration thou now expressest for these Asiatics is therefore only relative?"

"Certainly ; of two evils it is better to choose the less."

"Well: dost thou also remember thy question one

evening while I was looking at the Colossi—bulls with human heads—which decorated the portals of the same palace, what those monsters were saying to me, and to which question I did not reply till later on.”

“I think I remember.”

“I now finish that reply. The bulls seemed also to say to me: ‘We are stone ; we are strong and durable ; but what is this strength as against the piles of clay which stand around us and above us ? We are a pebble by the side of a mountain of earth which time must soon reduce to dust. Our strength and durability will not be able to hinder the vast and irreparable ruin of that which we seem to support.’”

Meanwhile, the farther they advanced, the more desert the country became. One might have imagined that the nomades who, previous to the Assyrian Empire, alone traversed these vast plains, had returned to take possession of the country. Sometimes they came upon little towns half in ruins, deserted villages, and uncultivated fields.

Babylon no longer existed save in name ; and the site of this immense city, the largest that ever did, or probably ever will exist, was marked only by mounds of clay intermingled with fragments of terra cotta. A forlorn-looking and but partially inhabited collection of houses occupied the thousandth part of the area once surrounded by those ramparts that were formerly the admiration of the world.

The scene was so depressing that Epergos had not the heart to rally his companion on his chagrin.

Dejected and silent, Doxius wished to depart next day, and Epergos made no objection. Accordingly, ascending the Euphrates, they bent their steps towards Palmyra. But this city, whose splendour they had witnessed under the rule of Diocletian, when that Emperor had vast edifices built there, was sadly shorn of its glory ; and what little life was kept up there, was due to the caravans which

called there on their way from Seleucia to Damascus or Antioch. They therefore bent their course towards the latter.

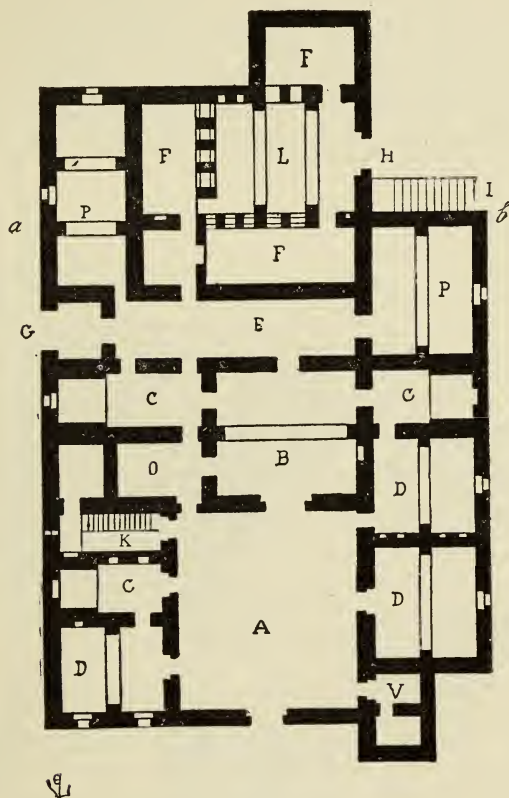
“What we have seen within the last few months,” said Epergos, while they were crossing regions which were almost desert, “ought to convince thee of this truth, my friend : that liberty only is fruitful,—that by it alone are men elevated and made better. Have we ever seen nations rise and acquire a noble moral energy under despotic rule? What has Egypt become, despite the wisdom and uniformity of its theocratic government?—The receptacle of all the corruption of the known world. What have the empires of Assyria and Persia become?—Almost a desert. We visited Rome in all her glory, when, tired of civil wars and factions, she confided the direction of the commonwealth to an emperor. What has she become, and what will she become, with that unwieldy body of her’s, in face of the more and more audacious enterprises of the barbarians?”

To this speech Doxius only replied in monosyllables, and his companion failed to rouse him.

They went on till they came one evening to the large country-town of Androna, whose well-constructed, rectangular houses, all with terrace-roofs, were built nearly on the same model. Most of the habitations of this town, like those of all the inhabited centres of Northern Syria, afford lodging to strangers and supply them with food ; since the country produces literally nothing, and is so completely devoid of streams, that the rain-water has to be collected in large tanks during the rainy season, which lasts about two months ; and this is the supply for the whole year.

The house at which the companions stopped was one of the largest. Here is the plan of it, figure 74. A somewhat spacious court, A, is entered, at the end of which is a large

hall, B. The dwelling-rooms of the family are at C. At D are rooms intended for various uses, and for keeping provisions. The kitchen is at O, and at K a flight of steps con-



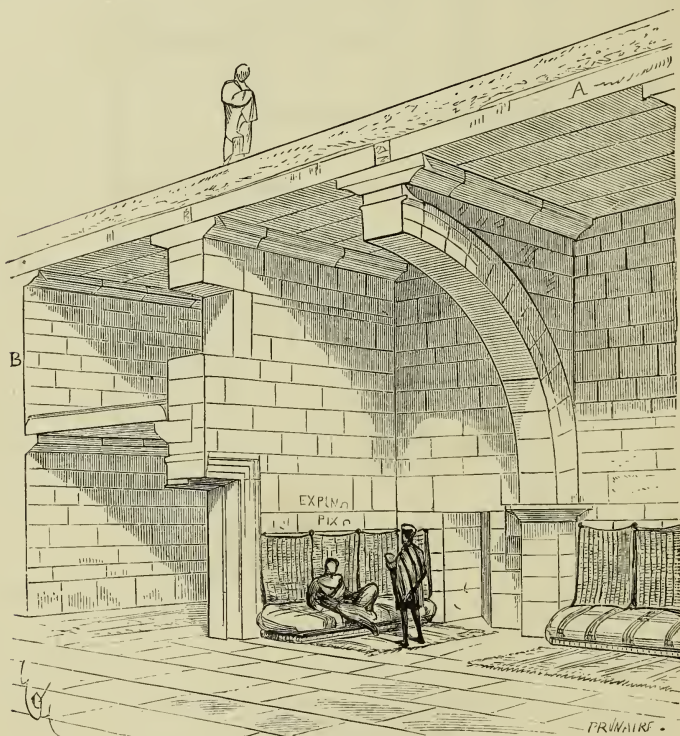
Plan of North Syrian Stone-roofed House.—FIG. 74.

ducts to the upper story, which rises on the buildings only as far as the line *a b*. The large hall occupies the height of the ground-floor and of the upper story.

Strangers admitted into the habitation enter at G, and are

accommodated in the hall E, and the rooms P, which serve as dormitories. At L is the stable, under cover, with the stalls for the animals at F, and mangers between the pillars. The horses enter by the door H. At I is a flight of steps leading on to the terrace that covers the stable. At V is a tower affording a view of the country; the upper terrace of this tower is reached by wooden ladders.

But these habitations present this peculiarity in their



Section of North Syrian Stone-roofed House.—FIG. 75.

construction, that they are built entirely of large stones, there being no available timber in the country. This accounts for the arrangement of the plan, which presents only

rooms of narrow dimensions, or divided by one or more semicircular arches that receive the large slabs forming floor and roof.¹

Figure 75, which gives a perspective section of the large hall, and the hall E in plan, explains this method of construction. We said that the great hall occupied the height of the ground-floor and first story ; accordingly the slabs A, which form its ceiling, support the terrace made of gravel and tempered clay.

At B is seen the room which, on the first floor, comes over the hall E of the plan.

Cupboards are made in the walls of most of the rooms ; for the furniture consists only of very low wide benches—covered with mattresses, along the walls, with mats fastened to these walls forming a back—a few small tables and some of the most indispensable utensils of pottery and bronze. Wood is so scarce in the country that the doors are often made of stone slabs turning on pivots.

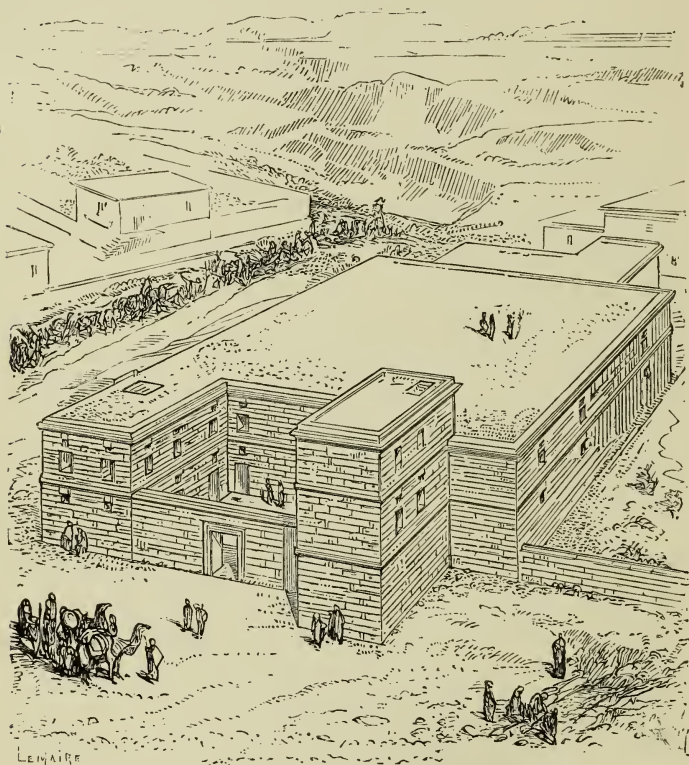
Figure 76 represents the exterior view of this habitation.

Its proprietor is a Greek ; he is affable, a good talker, and receives his guests with cordial politeness. When the horses are stabled, the servants go to fetch water from the tank under the court, and to which there is a flight of steps K. This tank is built exactly in the same way as the rooms ; that is to say, with a longitudinal central wall, on which rest the arches that support the slabs and the coarse concrete which composes the area of the court. The rain-water is led into the tank by means of stone channels.

As during eight or nine months of the year the country is very hot, these houses, made entirely of stone, afford their inhabitants a perfectly cool retreat, and preserve an equable temperature during the rainy and variable season.

¹ The double lines intersecting the rooms indicate the plan of these arches carrying stone ceilings.

Epergos, when examining this building, could not help remarking the arrangement of the plan, which reminded him, in miniature, of that of the Ninevite habitations which he had formerly visited. It had nothing in common with the Greek dwellings; and yet most of these habitations—



View of North Syrian Stone-roofed House.—FIG. 76.

varying in size, but designed on the same plan—were inhabited by Greeks.

In the centre of the town was a Christian basilica; for the country had been Christian more than a century; and not far from the church was a monastery also with a chapel.

Epergos wished to visit this establishment, and his host was willing to accompany him. Doxius, more depressed than ever, pretending fatigue, remained within the house. The idea of finding himself in a Christian country was unbearable. . . . But whither could he retreat? The world seemed to be undergoing a transformation; or rather seemed to him to be rushing into an obscurity full of danger and ruin.

The monastery scarcely differed, either in plan or aspect, from the large houses of the town; except that the upper story was divided into cells, the great hall was replaced by a chapel, and the courts were larger.

These monks received travellers who were too poor to pay for lodging and entertainment. For this purpose they had erected a special building; and their means of livelihood were the gifts bestowed by the wealthy inhabitants of the district; the caravans even contributing, when they returned satisfied with the results of their traffic.

Accompanied by his host, Epergos had an opportunity of appreciating the affability and intellectual development of the inhabitants, surrounded as they were by deserts and living on so sterile a soil. Although their dwellings were very simple, they were convenient; and in those which had most pretensions, the luxury consisted only of beautifully woven stuffs and of exquisitely-wrought utensils brought by the caravans coming from Persia. Slavery was maintained among them in spite of the Christian law; but it must be remarked that it had rather the character of domestic service imposed without severity, and that the slaves made part of the family. The only out-of-door recreation which the inhabitants of these towns and villages, possessing no gardens and scattered along the route of the caravans, could indulge in, was that of killing

the birds of passage in spring and autumn, and hunting beasts of prey and the gazelle.

These expeditions were, it must be understood, conducted on horseback ; for none but the poor went on foot. For transport, camels and asses were employed.

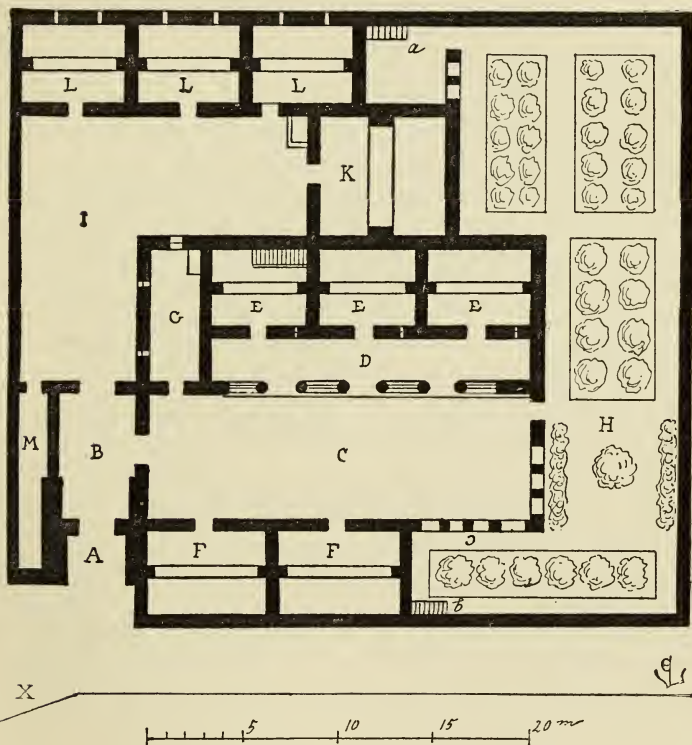
Life, therefore, was not spent in idleness ; for the continual passage of caravans, the necessity of providing for their subsistence, and traffic, diffused a constant animation through that little town. But this picture had its shadows ! Eager for gain, both rich and poor got as much as they could out of the travellers. Obliging and obsequious to those by whom they expected to profit, they were hard and un pitying towards those who were unable to pay for the services they solicited. The wealthiest practised the most extortionate usury ; and Christianity had done little to mitigate these abuses. Besides, most of the Greeks living in this country came there only to enrich themselves as quickly as possible. As soon as they had amassed large sums, they would spend the remainder of their lives in Byzantium or on the Asiatic coast of the *Ægean*. The conditions, therefore, on which the prosperity of the country depended were unchangeable ; and its inhabitants were obliged to be contented with such gains as could be made from the caravans on two or three lines. Outside these lines was the desert in all its solitude.

Having rested for three days, the travellers took leave of their host, who made them pay a full equivalent for the hospitality they had enjoyed ; and they continued their route northwards.

As they approached Antioch, the country gradually assumed a less naked aspect. Here and there might be seen olive-trees and vines on the hill-slopes, a few rustic dwellings where a poorly-productive cultivation was carried

on, and flocks in the bottoms, where grew dry scanty grass, and where thorny bushes were abundant.

They soon came near to Chalcis, lying in a comparatively attractive region. To the left, the horizon was broken by a long chain of blue mountains; and towards the right,



Plan of North Syrian Timber-roofed House.—FIG. 77.!

gardens terraced on the slopes of lofty hills, indicated careful culture.

Small dry stone walls kept up the earth, and hindered the heavy winter rains from furrowing the slopes. These rains, collected in tanks and basins, afforded the means of

sparingly watering these gardens during the hot season. A few white houses, with their tiled roofs, brightened up the dull green curtain of the olive-trees, which was cut by those innumerable little walls; thus forming something like the steps of an immense staircase.

Epergos and Doxius halted in a large village two hours' walk from Chalcis; for their host had given them a letter of introduction to one of his friends who lived there; recommending them not to sojourn in the town, where they would be very badly lodged just now, on account of a great market which was being held there. Chalcis is, in fact, the junction point of all the routes which form the south, the east, and the north-east approaches to Antioch.

The houses of the village were not covered with terraces like those of Androna. The roofs, made of timber, carried tiling; and in every habitation, a small garden, planted with olive, fig, pomegranate, orange trees, and vines, gave these dwellings an aspect of cheerfulness, which contrasted with the barrenness of the small towns our travellers had just quitted.

The house of Theagenes, better arranged than that of the wealthy proprietor of Androna, consisted of an arched entrance A forming a porch on the highway (Fig. 77), of a fore-court B opening into the principal court C, bordered by a portico D, and three chambers E. In one of these chambers, a flight of steps ascended to the first story, arranged similarly to the ground-floor. The fore-court B also gave entrance into the yard I, with quarters L for those attached to the house and large stable at K. Gardens occupied the space H, and at M were latrines.

Figure 78 gives a bird's-eye view of this habitation, taken from the point X. The floors were made of stone, like those of the houses at Androna, and the rafters of the roof were carried by arches. It must be remarked that the

double portico gave to these buildings an appearance of elegance not possessed by those of which we have just seen a specimen. A mingling of Asiatic and Greek traditions was observable which highly pleased Epergos.



View of the North Syrian Timber-roofed House.—FIG. 78.

Well built with large stones laid without mortar, the building had an aspect of solidity by no means to be undervalued in a country where earthquakes are frequent. Two tanks situated beneath the rooms F and L, to which the steps *a* and *b*¹ led down, afforded means for watering the gardens ;

¹ See figure 77.

for they were supplied during a considerable part of the year by a stream of water filtering through the calcareous strata on which the buildings stood.

The interiors of this habitation did not otherwise differ at all from those of the houses of Androna ; there was the same very simple furniture, the same display of rich stuffs. As to the inhabitants, although their chief occupation was the supplying of the caravans, and traffic, they nevertheless cultivated a few olive-groves, vines, and orange-trees, and were not obliged to buy or get from a distance all the necessaries of life. Accordingly they were less greedy for gain than were the people of the wild, dusty country which Epergos and Doxius had just left.

Theagenes was short ; his eyes, bright as two black diamonds, were in continual motion, and his whole person seemed moved by springs. He welcomed the travellers,—at the same time giving orders to his servants, busying himself with everything, inquiring about everything, and answering all questions in a breath. To have the horses stabled, to show the visitors their quarters, to question them as to the purpose of their journey, and give orders for the repast, was but an affair of a few moments. And while Epergos and Doxius were resting in the shade beneath the portico, and were being served with cold water and fruit, the little man went hither and thither, calling the women, scolding the grooms, remarking that such or such a piece of furniture was out of its place, that a sheep must be killed, that a certain caravan was behind its time, and that it was the hour for watering the garden.

Thanks to the activity of the master, the house was spotlessly clean. The walls, lime-washed inside, were without a stain ; and the servants, taking example from Theagenes, were not at rest for a moment. These active ways differed so much from the nonchalant habits of the

Oriental, among whom the travellers had lived for the last few months, that they wondered whence this stirring little man could possibly have sprung.

When, during the evening meal, the family were assembled, Epergos and Doxius, after having answered the numerous questions of their host, could not refrain from complimenting him on his activity and the excellent order of his dwelling, or from asking him if he was born in the country.

"Oh, no," answered Theagenes ; "I was born at Samos. I have long been engaged in trade, coasting from Smyrna to Tyre. Having made a little money, and wishing to spend the remainder of my days in tranquillity, I came here ; knowing that on these highways from Persia to Antioch, one may, with energy, double his substance in a short time. I rebuilt this house, which was dilapidated when I bought it ; and I hope, in a few years, to return to Samos with a fair fortune."

"So," said Epergos, "you do not belong to the country?"

"No, certainly ; what can one do here ? It is a place of passage, where life is hard, where more thieves than honest men are to be found, and where the population is continually changing. One must make a fortune as quickly as possible, and to do that, keep a constant and sharp look-out ; otherwise one is quickly ruined. Three-fourths of the estates you see in this country are in the hands of usurers, who have ultimately dispossessed the original owners ; and if this goes on, the whole land will belong to the wealthy people of Antioch, who lend their money only at a dear rate of interest. They let their estates at a high rent to the Greeks and Armenians, who find it very difficult to make both ends meet, and often decamp without paying. Thus the love of gain and the want of money, which each day makes itself felt more and more among the people of Antioch, tend to deprive that fine city of its source of

wealth ; for what would become of Antioch without all these stations, which enable caravans to come in such great numbers across Arabia, to convey thither the products of Persia ?

“ And can you suppose that men will continue to live in these sterile regions, unless they can hope for great profits ? ”

“ But,” interrupted Doxius, “ is not this wealthy population of Antioch, Christian ? ”

“ Assuredly ; but Christianity has not caused the people to lose its usurious habits, in spite of the bishops and councils that have tried in vain to cure this Asiatic plague among the new converts. But so inveterate are these customs among us, that many families among the most considerable and affluent have had for generations no other means of keeping up their rank and fortunes than usury. Thus most of the free men, who live by their toil, see all their gains fall into the hands of the idle rich people of their great cities which are resplendent with luxury. It is not less true that the stations situated between Palmyra, Epiphania, and Antioch are being depopulated. At the same time, persecutions commenced against certain Christian sects, since Byzantium was made the seat of empire, have brought back to these countries families that were forced to leave the capital.”

“ What ! ” returned Doxius, “ are Christians already persecuting one another ! They have been dominant in the Empire only for a few years ! ” Theagenes merely smiled, and wishing his guests “ Good-night,” alleging that he had to get up very early the next morning, he left them to their rest.

When alone, Epergos and Doxius discussed their future plans. What should they do ? Where should they go ? The West had nothing new to offer them ; they had

visited every quarter of it. They, therefore, determined to continue their explorations eastwards, passing north of ancient Media and Bactriana, crossing the upper courses of the Indus and the Ganges, keeping along the range of the Emodi mountains, and continuing eastwards to the extremity of the earth. This plan was agreeable to Doxius, who had taken a dislike to the west, especially since the Empire had embraced Christianity.

“We shall see, in passing,” said Epergos, “what has become of our friends of the Upper Indus; their habits must have changed since the time we visited them.”

“Let us hope they have not,” said Doxius.

CHAPTER XX.

BUDDHIST INDIA.

“**T**O what purpose, then, did Siddhârtha, the Buddha, come among you inculcating poverty and the renunciation of earthly goods ; why did he clothe himself in a tattered shroud taken from a corpse ; to what purpose did he enjoin charity on the rich, patience on the poor, fasting for six years and acquiring at the foot of the Tree of Understanding the character entitling to the name of Buddha and attaining the Triple Science,—since I behold throughout the country nothing but sumptuous palaces, temples magnificently decorated, convents provided with all the comforts of life, proud priests taking no thought for those who are without shelter or food, Schatriyas bent only on war and the destruction of men, and privileged castes who hold in contempt their less fortunate brethren ?”

Thus spoke Doxius amidst a numerous assemblage gathered at Benares to discuss certain points of doctrine.

His words were received with murmurs of disapprobation. Doxius continued : “What says Siddhârtha ?—

“‘All human beings, whether of the lower, the middle, or the upper castes, whether excellent, indifferent, or detestable in point of character, may be ranged in three classes : one-third is in Error, and will continue in it ; one-third is in the Truth ; one-third remains in uncertainty. Thus a man standing on the shore of a pool sees lotuses below the water, others at its surface, others again elevated above the water. Whether I teach or do not teach the law, those

who are settled in Error will not know it. Whether I teach or do not teach the law, those who are settled in the Truth will know it ; but those who are in uncertainty will, if I teach the law, become acquainted with it ; whereas if I do not teach the law, they will not know it.' Who among you, then, are the lotuses that are on the level of the water, and that flourish above its surface?—the good and the undecided? I see only those who are in Error: since no one recognises the law, or if he does know it, is willing to submit to it. Charity, taught by Buddha and practised by himself, ought to extinguish every selfish feeling in the human heart; whereas I see that among you none thinks of any one but himself. Buddha says that we ought not to utter falsehoods, or even indulge in vain and frivolous discourse; whereas I have heard nothing but deceitful or idle talk.

"Siddhârtha preached humility of heart, and said to the professors of religion: 'Conceal your good works and avow your sins;' yet no one confesses his sins twice a month, with a loud voice, in presence of the congregation. The law of Buddha is simple and definite, a child can understand it. But you! What have you done? you have buried it in obscure casuistry. . . ."

On this, cries and threats succeeded murmurs, so that Epergos had great difficulty in getting his friend safe out of the assembly.

"I must say," observed Epergos, when they had reached a place of safety, "that I cannot at all understand thy proceedings. When we were in the West, the Christians had no great share in thy esteem, and now thou art full of zeal for Buddha and his precepts of morality!"

"It is thou," replied Doxius, "who never seest further than thy nose. Buddhism is true, for it tends to arrest what thou callest the upward impulse of the human mind ;

it tends to thrust man back into the nothingness which he should never have quitted ; and when I see those who profess to follow the precepts of Buddha, much less eager to attain Nirvâna than to build sumptuous temples and monasteries for their monks, and palaces for their nobles, and giving themselves up to all kinds of pleasure, I cannot repress an indignation which is only too much deserved."

"Ah ! my friend, I beg you once for all to let humanity follow its destiny. Thousands of years have passed away since the time when we were on the plateaus of Mount Mérou, and all thy efforts, thy wrath, and thy counsels, have not arrested the progress of that humanity. Thou mayst perhaps have been able to throw a few pebbles into the torrent : thou hast seen the water boil up for a moment, and hast fancied that the current was going to stop. These beings, believe me, are not made to resign themselves to nothingness, and to consider that as the supreme good. They will abandon Buddhism ; for they wish to live, not only in this world, but in eternity."

Doxius's invective, which had excited the anger of a great part of the assembly, produced nevertheless a somewhat profound impression upon the mind of some of those present. Among them was a very rich merchant, named Kalanta. He had founded several sanghârâmas (places of assembly) for those who wished to discourse on the law ; he practised charity, and had a great affection for holy persons. The words of Doxius aroused in Kalanta's mind a great desire to have a person in his house who seemed to know the law so well, and whose solemn deportment inspired him with respect. He sought him out therefore, enjoining on his messengers to show the greatest deference for Doxius's knowledge, and to entreat him to take up his abode for some days in the palace of Kalanta, that he might consecrate it by instructing his family. Prostrate

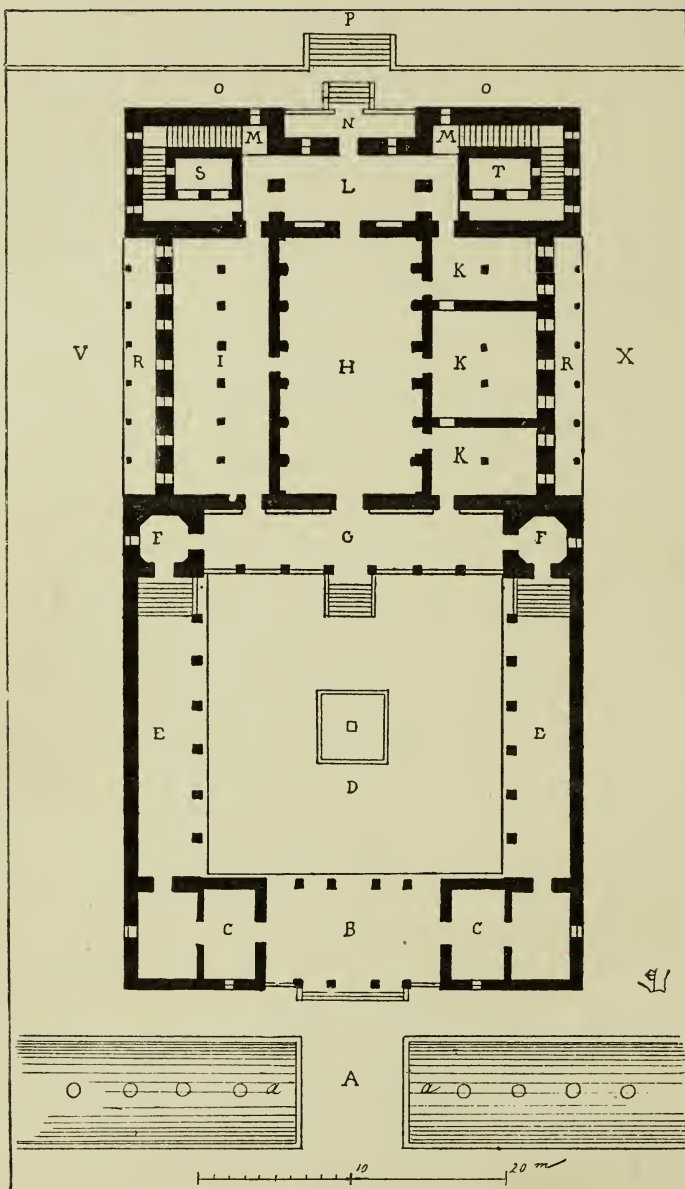
on the ground, the messengers informed Doxius of their master's desire. Epergos, who wished to take advantage of this occasion to see the palace of one of the richest inhabitants of Benares, joined his entreaties to those of the envoys of Kalanta ; so that the two companions, mounted on an elephant brought for the purpose,—for the mansion of Kalanta was outside the city,—found themselves in the evening in front of this splendid abode. Epergos passed for Doxius's secretary.

The vast gardens of the palace of Kalanta extend as far as the Ganges, and venerable trees overshadow its banks. From the habitation, situated on slightly elevated ground, there is a view of the broad river, losing itself in the west in a plain covered with vegetation of the most brilliant verdure. Towards the north appear the first slopes of the Himalayas lost in a warm haze ; and on the west, the city of Benares, with the wall that surrounds it, its storied buildings, shining in the sun, and the thousands of boats moored along its houses and its squares covered with tents, great parasols, and awnings of all kinds. The purity of the air enables one to distinguish, even at this distance, the crowd moving along the banks of the great river.

Arrived at the turn of the road that leads to Kalanta's residence, this magnificent panorama is suddenly displayed before the eyes of our travellers, who cannot refrain from giving utterance to their admiration.

"Here," said Epergos, "we have a holy man who has made an excellent choice of a place upon earth in which to wait for annihilation, to which he doubtless aspires. And thou seriously believest, Doxius, that when one has such a spectacle daily before his eyes, he can easily resign himself to quit it for Nirvâna !"

"Silence ! Epergos ! Nirvâna is to human beings the end of their probation ; all who are endowed with wisdom



Plan of Hindoo Palace.—FIG. 79.

ought to desire to reach the threshold of that palace which is the termination of all evils."

"Come, I see that thou art exactly in the mood to edify our host ; and if he does not take thee for Buddha, he must be very unreasonable."

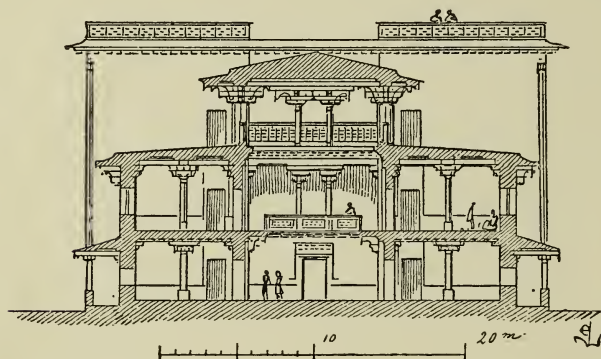
"Cease thy scoffing !"

"Oh, don't be alarmed ! I will not compromise thee."

The travellers and their escort enter the gardens, which are admirably well kept. They soon reach the banks of a canal supplied by a number of fountains (fig. 79). A bridge A is thrown across it in front of the principal entrance to the habitation. Epergos and Doxius having dismounted from their elephant, are introduced into the portico B, which serves for a vestibule to the palace. On the two sides of the open portico, the rooms C are appointed for the porter's lodging, and as places where the master's orders may be waited for. From these rooms there is an approach and an ascent by steps to the main building through the porticos E, or through the court D, ornamented in the centre by a basin with a fountain. The porticos abut on two small rooms F, where the servants await their master's exit, and an elevated portico G, which gives entrance to the great hall of assembly H. To the left of this hall, at I, is another hall, divided by a range of pillars, which serves for a promenade, and where the servants of the palace habitually stay. At K are some of the dwelling rooms. At S and T are kitchens and stores for provisions. Two flights of stairs M, conduct to the first story which contains, above the apartments I and K, bedrooms opening on a projecting balcony at the side of the great hall, for the latter rises from the bottom. At L is the vestibule for the servants, with its steps N and a terrace O, rising to the level of the upper garden which is a platform. At R are exterior porticos or covered promenades. Figure 80 exhibits a section through VX, which shows the arrangement

of the rooms and of the great hall. The latter receives light and air from above the terraces which form the roofing of the apartments of the first story. The stairs ascend to the level of two platforms, whence a view can be obtained of the whole country. Figure 81 gives the interior of the great hall towards the far end.

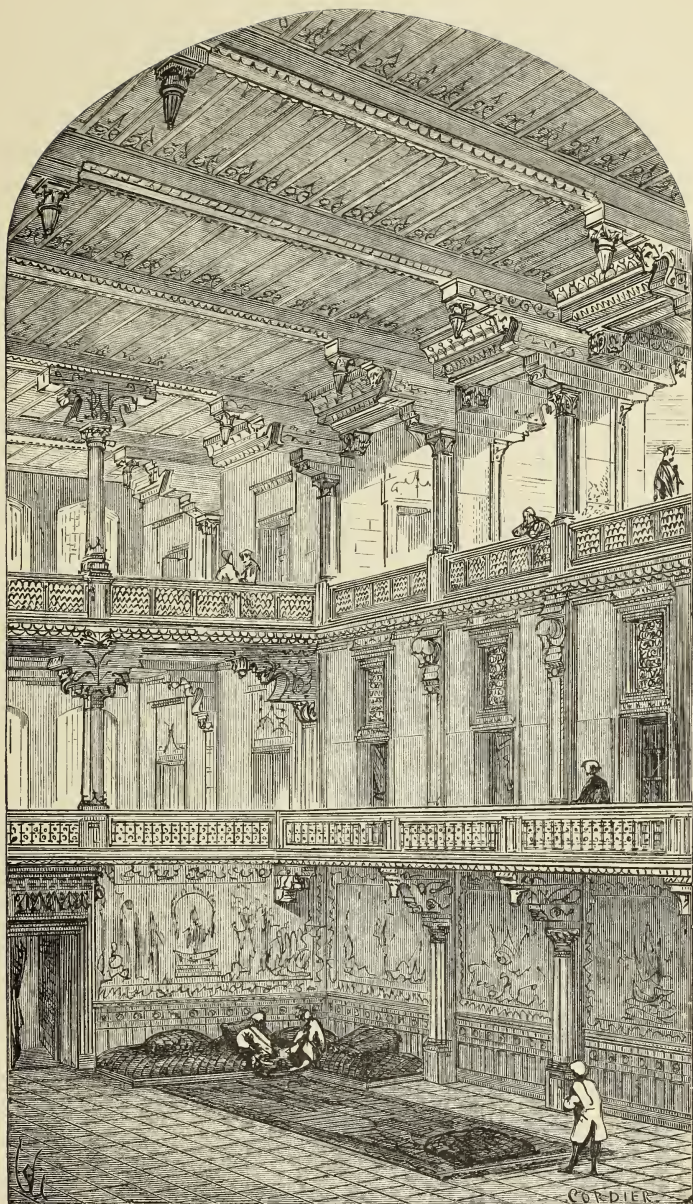
Kalanta, seated in the portico G, with his legs crossed, on a rich carpet, was awaiting his guests. Without rising he



Section of Hindoo Palace.—FIG. 80.

signed to Doxius to seat himself opposite to him, while Epergos and the persons of his suite remained standing.

“My dwelling, Doxius, is honoured by thy presence. Thy discourse is that of a saint, and I am anxious to converse with thee respecting the interpretation of the law.” Then having made a sign to his attendants, they left the master and his guest alone. Epergos, it would seem, was more curious to visit the palace than to know what the two sages said to each other; for he followed those who had conducted him thither, under the pretext of arranging Doxius’s apartment conformably to his simple habits. We do not know what Kalanta and Doxius found to say to each other during the two long hours that followed. We must suppose that their conversation had a great interest for



INTERIOR OF HINDOO PALACE.—FIG. 81.

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themselves, since it gave Epergos time to go over the palace from top to bottom, accompanied by a person who acted as steward, and was very desirous of exhibiting the beauties of the mansion to the pretended secretary of the saint. The whole structure was of stone, bricks, and wood. The columns, cut out of hard stone, were eight-sided, polished with the greatest care, and surmounted by capitals delicately sculptured. The walls, built of bricks, with facings of stone outside up to the height of a man, were plastered without and within ; the ceilings were composed of pieces of timber ; corbelled out and ornamented with sculpture.

Notwithstanding the external beauty of this building, Epergos did not fail to observe that it resembled in principle the rude structures which he had seen formerly on the shores of the Upper Indus.

The composition of the great hall attracted his special admiration. The timber corbellings, so well adapted to relieve the bearing of the great beams, and to form shelters outside ; the arrangement of the interior balcony which gave access to the bedrooms of the first story ; the sort of double gallery which closed in the back of the hall ; the admirable distribution of light in this vast interior, the whole of whose lower part was immersed in a soft half-light ; the comparative coolness of this lower part ; the floor spread with carpets ; the sobered brilliance of the paintings ; the rich appearance of the ceiling resplendent with gold and azure ; and the quiet of the place,—all tended to breathe into his mind a kind of vague but delightful ecstasy.

On the pretext of arranging certain very important notes which Doxius had entrusted to him, he asked the steward to leave him alone for a few moments, and seating himself on one of the divans which occupied the corners of the hall, he began to meditate.

“What a strange being is man !” said he to himself ;

“he can forget nothing ; and in spite of the vast improvements which the course of time introduces into his works, the trace of his first efforts, or of the first influences to which he was subjected, always recurs. Two branches diverge from the same trunk, one in a south-westerly, the other in a south-easterly direction ; the one reaching Media, the other India. The first bears with it traditions of a construction in wood, but it is developed in the midst of peoples who hollow out their dwellings in the ground, or raise a kind of den of clay ; it constructs those Assyrian palaces with their vaultings and their thick earthen walls, exhibiting all the time in this concrete structure the trace of its primitive wooden buildings. The other branch is developed among those races which are inferior in power of mind, but among which the handicrafts have reached a considerable degree of perfection ; and while remaining faithful to its traditions, it makes use of the means employed by the peoples whom it subjugates. Is there not here some vestige of the construction which I formerly observed in the house of that fat Fau who showed us the door, and that, too, mingled with the Aryan traditions of the conquerors ? And did not the Ionian architecture itself exhibit some striking relations with what we see here ? The great hall, the courts surrounded by porticos, are persistent features which I find among the Aryas at their very cradle, among the Egyptians, the Ionians, the Greeks and the Romans, in Persia, and again here. All present differences, and yet are substantially the same. Infinite variety in unity.

“And why do those primary elements of construction reach a purer form among the Greeks, whereas elsewhere they tend to become obscured ? Why among the Greeks do we find that rational selection and moderation in regard to form, that sobriety which is so charming, and which leaves the wish for fuller development ? Why do we find

here this profusion of strange and sometimes grotesque sculpture which suggests abuse and satiety? Why should this be so? What is its cause? Is it because the Aryas who settled in Greek soil mingled with a certain race, whilst those who took up their abode here found another already powerful? Must we consider the products of human intelligence as proportioned to the special aptitudes of each race and its admixtures? The more I observe, the more complicated and difficult of solution do these problems appear to me! And in the course of ages, if all these nations which are scarcely known to each other, should come to have frequent and intimate relations, what will be the result of the mingling of these traditions and of these various influences? Will it be for the better, or for the worse? Will it be the irremediable decay or the culmination of the products of human intelligence?"

Epergos would have continued his monologue for some considerable time, if Kalanta and Doxius had not entered the great hall. Their conversation must have left a deep impression on their minds, for neither of them appeared to be conscious of the beauty of the place in which they found themselves. The sun now near its setting was darting its last rays in a horizontal direction, through the large and lofty openings of the hall; and above the luminous dust, the ceiling, all sparkling with gold, appeared to rise to a prodigious height. Every projection shone forth in brilliant relief, and the pavement seemed a mirror reflecting the mixture of colours with which the walls were covered.

Epergos advanced to meet his host, and bowing down to the very ground, said: "Give permission, Sire, to the humble secretary of the sage Doxius to beg his master to consider for a moment the splendour of the place in which he is." Doxius, appearing to start from a dream, raised his eyes.

"It is, in truth," said he, "very beautiful ; but what is it in comparison with the Triple Science ?"

"Well," said Epergos to himself, "he is decidedly insane, or at any rate he is endeavouring to render our host more insane than he was before."

During the three following days' sleep alone interrupted the conversations between Kalanta and Doxius. Epergos took advantage of the mystic absorption of his companion to visit the environs of this beautiful abode : he ascertained and was not greatly surprised at the fact, that the houses of the inhabitants belonging to the inferior castes were of very different character to the magnificent palace of his host. For the most part, they were wretched huts made of bamboos or of tempered clay with rushes or thatch.

"I can very well understand," said he to Doxius one evening, "how the inhabitants of this country who occupy the miserable dwellings I visited this morning, should be eager to accept the law of Buddha, and that they should aspire to annihilation as the end of their miseries ; but I can scarcely believe that Kalanta and all who live like him can long remain its adherents. If they followed it to the letter, the first thing incumbent upon them would be to distribute their wealth to all these poor wretches, and to live like them on a footing of equality. Hast thou succeeded in persuading Kalanta to do so ?"

"If thou wast acquainted with the doctrine of Buddha, thou wouldst know that all creatures, in proportion to their merits or faults, pass through successive states more or less approaching or removed from perfect knowledge and wisdom. If Kalanta is in a position to meditate on Nirvâna in complete security and free from cares, it is because he has already in other bodies passed through the trials necessary for attaining that degree in the scale of humanity, in which he is able to repose and meditate until

his death. If he fails to fulfil all the precepts of the law, he may fall back into the miserable condition in which those are of whom thou hast been speaking ; and similarly these, by searching for truth during their time of probation upon earth, may return to it in a better condition. Buddha never preached equality among men ; for all are not placed in the same grade of wisdom and knowledge. But he preached Charity ; for all can ascend higher in the scale in the series of transmigrations they undergo : and it is even a duty to facilitate their acquisition of the means of so doing."

"And at the top of the ladder what is to be found ?"

"Nirvâna ; that is to say, the end of trials,—that end which is the nothingness from which the world issued."

"It is, then, not worth while to mount so high."

"Thou wilt never comprehend these mysteries, Epergos ; for thou art narrow-minded and altogether absorbed in earthly things, and affectest to disdain supreme wisdom."

"What dost thou say ! We have already seen so many of these mysteries, we have listened to so many who have pretended to the knowledge of absolute wisdom—though they were scarcely agreed among themselves as to where it resides—that for my part, without being narrow-minded, as thou allegest, I may reasonably have my doubts. And as to thyself, have I not seen thee embracing in turn and proclaiming as the acme of wisdom the theogony of the Egyptians, the theology of the Assyrians, and subsequently the politico-religious system of the Romans ? and now I find thee a Buddhist. Very good ; I see no harm in it ; but do allow me the liberty of belonging to none of them, without calling me narrow-minded."

"What thou callest an infatuation for different forms of Truth, is in fact in my case—as with human beings—only a desire to know and to attain that absolute truth. Like other thinking beings, I am ascending the steps of

the ladder, and what thou imaginest to be contradiction is only transformation."

"I must not be surprised, then, if I see thee abandoning the doctrine of Buddha for another which thou deemest nearer to absolute truth?"

"Possibly!"

"Thou art in doubt, therefore, and we are not far from coming to an understanding with each other. How could the teaching of Buddha lead to absolute wisdom and truth—which merge in Nirvâna—if there might possibly be another teaching, wiser or truer than that? This system of doctrine, therefore, is only relative; and is it not allowable to doubt the absolute validity of that which is relative?"

"Thy mind, Epergos, has been profoundly corrupted by staying too long among the Greeks: I observe it continually."

"Permit me to say, Doxius, that when thou art come to the end of thy arguments, thou art wont to have recourse to abuse; and this has been thy wont, not since thy sojourn among the Egyptians or the Assyrians merely, but ever since the beginning of the world."

Next morning the travellers quitted their host, who loaded them with presents, and entreated Doxius to come to see him often, and confirm him in the knowledge of the law.



CHAPTER XXI.

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE FAR EAST.

ON leaving Benares, our travellers ascended the Ganges; they came to mountainous countries of remarkable beauty, for it seemed as if the charms of all the climates of the globe were united in this region. Sometimes, in wide valleys, was to be seen a luxuriant tropical vegetation; while a few hours' walk would bring them to forests of firs and larches on the slopes of the mountains, to wild gorges and peaks covered with eternal snows. Enormous edifices cut in the rocks in honour of Buddha, testified to the faith of the people; and by the side of these prodigious results of human industry were miserable huts of wood and reeds. Epergos was anxious to revisit the Upper Indus, to see whether this ancient cradle of the Aryas, whence so many nations had issued, preserved its primitive simplicity, or had suffered a transformation. The travellers reached the valley of Cashmere, which they had descended many centuries before. They could scarcely observe any difference in the customs of the dwellers in these highlands; they were building their houses just as they built them formerly. Their physiognomy was the same as it had been, they had retained the simplicity of their manners, and tribes continued to emigrate westwards, since towards the south the land was already occupied.

Having ascended the course of the Indus, they reached the plateaus of Thibet; there nothing had been changed; the houses of the villages were detached as formerly. No cities

were to be seen, and the inhabitants were engaged only in the chase, the breeding of cattle, and the exchange of certain products of their own country for wrought metals and implements of various kinds which they obtained from Cashmere. In the countries where wood abounded, the houses were made of timber—trunks of trees piled up and framed at the corners—and protected by projecting roofs covered with bark. In the deserts, where wood was scarce, these houses were constructed of rubble stone put together with a poor kind of mortar, or with clay when there was any in the neighbourhood, and covered with trunks of trees, brushwood, and a thick layer of rammed earth.

There is no sight gloomier than these abodes, always built against the rock to protect them from the winds which at these altitudes are terribly violent, buried beneath the snow for eight months in the year, and lost amid solitudes into which the traveller dares not venture. In summer the steep slopes are covered with verdure; and during the four months which this season lasts, numerous flocks are to be found on the loftiest of the prairies, while the inhabitants lose no time in mowing the lower parts to lay in as large a store as possible of the abundant forage which they produce.

The difficulty of sustaining life in such inhospitable regions has from time immemorial induced their energetic inhabitants to go in search of milder climates. Epergos and Doxius therefore came across the track of bodies of these emigrants, who were to be seen, like their ancestors, coming down from their mountains with waggons, in which were the women, the children, and such movables as they were obliged to carry with them.

While they were resting in a village whose rude appearance was in perfect harmony with the country (fig. 82), Epergos said to his companion:—

“Well, art thou not as strongly convinced as I am that



HIMALAYAN VILLAGE.—FIG. 82.

[To face page 286.

these Aryas cannot develop the qualities with which Nature has endowed them, except in contact with other races? Here, in the vicinity of their cradle, things are as they were many thousands of years ago, or nearly so. It would seem as if they, like their mountain home, were rude and infertile, but destined to fertilise the plains. Look at those snow-clad summits, those far-stretching heaps of rocky debris, the ruins of the peaks, this valley strewn with pebbles through which run those tortuous streams of a muddy torrent, these occasional breadths of verdure, these ravines worn by the ice, and these rocks rent by the lightning only. This spectacle suggests only dislocation and death; yet it is owing to these ruins and snows that vast regions are covered with a fertile alluvium."

"Yes," said Doxius.

"And how immense must have been the work of Nature in smoothing down these valleys, and thus converting the ruins of rocks, that seem unchangeable, into a fine dust spread over immense spaces, which are soon covered with a rich vegetation! . . . And thus it is with men; they must descend from the heights and mingle with foreign elements, to constitute the finest civilisations."

"To what purpose?" retorted Doxius, "since these civilisations lead to corruption and error?"

"What is thy reason for this assertion?"

"Have I not seen it often enough?"

"Thou hast, like myself, seen only one part of the great travail of Nature, yet thou art always ready to draw sweeping inferences and final conclusions from the observations of the moment. Here is a torrent which in this valley, certainly, produces nothing—only heaps up pebbles and whirls them along. It seems disorderly, useless, devastating. Must we thence conclude that this torrent is only an agent of destruction? Go ten days' march down the plain,

and thou wilt see these waters, made turbid by the trituration of the pebbles incessantly fretting against one another, become tranquil and limpid, and depositing on their shores the alluvium in which the lotus grows. Do not then be in a hurry to judge or to infer from partial effects, when thou knowest not what will be the final results."

"I cannot admit principles which would tend to nothing short of justifying everything, and regarding error itself as necessary."

"Remark, I pray, that it is not principles, but observations that are in question. My method is to observe, reserving my deductions—I do not say my conclusions—till my observations throw light upon a series of facts. As for thee, Doxius, thou concludest *à priori*, and lovest thy temper if observations run counter to thy conclusions."

"Yes, thou observest ; but thou never observest anything but facts that strike thy senses ; and thou regardest all that exists in this world as a kind of mechanism moved by an irresistible force. Truth and Error attract thy attention equally, and thou dost not seek to make the one prevail and to suppress the other."

"Suppress ! suppress ! It is easy to talk about it ; but we must first know, before suppressing, whether what one takes for error may not be truth. That torrent down there is very mischievous : it destroys everything that lies in its course ; it renders sterile a valley that might be covered with verdure if it did not indulge its humour for incessantly moving those heaps of pebbles from one bank to another ; suppose I suppress it, then ;—the plains of India are no longer irrigated, nor fertilised by the alluvium which it elaborates."

"Thou always supportest thy reasoning on the order of things in the material world."

"And on what, then, wouldst thou have me base it ? On

Nirvâna? Can I be assured that there is a Nirvâna? Can I be assured that the souls of men pass into a succession of bodies before reaching it?"

"We shall never agree upon these subjects."

"Probably not!"

The travellers directed their course for a considerable time along the chain of the Himalayas, then, having crossed the Brahmapootra, they passed the Mien mountains occupied by savage tribes. Thence they went down to the countries formerly visited by them and inhabited by men of the yellow race. There they ascertained that progress was very gradual. On the banks of the rivers bamboos continued to be used in building, and the dwellings scarcely differed in point of construction from those of the fat Fau. The art of carpentry, however, had been developed; and advancing towards the north-east, they found peoples following the arts and less remote from those improvements in them which a long practice secures, than those of the south. Usually, however, the houses of these peoples were built very slightly and simply. Wood, which these countries furnished in abundance, was almost exclusively employed, with brick, burnt or sun-dried. Many of these houses were nothing more than a covered space closed in with walls of wood, within which, as occasion required, they set up partitions formed of mats. The dwellings of the wealthy consisted of a series of pavilions more or less apart from each other—each containing only one or two apartments—isolated, or communicating by means of light wooden galleries. Thus these dwellings, when extensive, resembled a village interspersed with gardens carefully planted and cultivated. It was a rare thing for the son of a rich man to pull down his father's house and build it anew. If it was falling into decay through age, he contented himself with erecting by the side of the old buildings,

new pavilions differing very slightly from those which he was abandoning to ruin. These houses consisted only of a ground-floor, covered with very projecting roofs artistically wrought.

In this country, more than in any other, the traditions of the past were religiously preserved; strangers, therefore, were not allowed to sojourn in it, scarcely even to pass through it. Buddhism had been widely diffused among these peoples, but in a diluted form, being limited to certain superstitious practices. The elevated character of its doctrines was obscured by a host of crude and ridiculous legends. Doxius observed this with pain, but his companion only laughed, and was greatly interested in studying the arts of this industrious, patient, laborious, nature-loving people. Never had Epergos seen so many rare flowers and fruits; never so many paintings and carvings in the houses; never so many articles of domestic use elaborated *con amore*; never such a masterly use of the metals. It seemed to him as if these men delighted in creating an endless variety of wants, in order to have the pleasure of satisfying them by the most complicated and singular methods. They wove silken stuffs of marvellous beauty and delicacy, and skilfully ornamented them with metallic threads. The ceramic art was carried among them to the utmost limits of perfection; and their white clay pottery was enamelled with the most brilliant colours, and embellished with the most graceful designs. They especially excelled in representing the flowers and elegant plants of their gardens, and domestic animals—as if accustomed to meditate on the productions of nature, and love them with passion.

In Cathay, where our travellers stopped for a considerable time, Epergos to study the manufactures of its countries, and Doxius to endeavour to preach the law of

Buddha, they hired a small house, which was only one of the pavilions before mentioned, consisting of two apartments, with some indifferent accommodation for the servants. This pavilion (fig. 83) was constructed entirely of wood, and placed upon a platform of dry stone-work, with a small flight of steps before the single door. In point of struc-



Cathayan House.—FIG 83.

ture, nothing could be more simple: posts, connected by clips and stays, carried horizontal beams projecting outside, relieved by brackets, and kept in place by a system of wall-plates strengthened by braces. On the ends of the

beams rested the eave-plates which received the rafters. All was so curiously fashioned, perforated, and painted, that the aspect of this pavilion, amid the verdure, was delightful to the eye. The windows were filled in with upright bars of turned wood, behind which curtains of stuff were drawn at night if it was desired to keep out the cold. The roof was entirely covered with very thin plates of copper ingeniously turned up in the same manner as tiles.

By means of shutters which opened above the windows in the height of the wall-plates, ventilation could be obtained through the intervals left between them, for the ceiling was placed upon the bracketed beams.

The spaces between the posts, and beneath the windows were closed in with boards.

Epergos, though he reflected that these wooden structures were derived from the early buildings he had formerly seen erected by the Aryas, and to whose improvement he had contributed, did not conceal from himself that this love of the complicated, this elaboration of details, this multitude of minute precautions, were a peculiarity of the yellow race. The Aryas he concluded had been able to exercise only an ephemeral influence over this race, which was developing its arts in conformity with its own genius.

He began to recal what he had seen during his sojourn at Athens, and in the cities of Hellas, and assured himself of the immense interval that separated the works of these descendants of the Aryas from those of the yellow races of the extreme East. While his friends the Greeks had skillfully simplified the forms suggested by the structure and the materials employed; while they were moderate in the use of ornament, and used discrimination in reproducing material objects, the yellow races of the East seemed to take pleasure in making the simplest structure complicated, to be lavish of ornament, and to delight in

representations of strange monsters; and yet—Epergos reflected further,—could it be admitted that the inhabitants of these countries had a more lively imagination, a mind more open to impression than the Greeks? Have they a greater love for the stupendous? No, assuredly; the dwellers in this country are little prone to seek the higher spheres of thought. Their written works do not exhibit any excess of imagination. Their mind is practical, and they know little of heroism or of lofty ambitions; they are satisfied with a quiet and obscure existence, provided they enjoy material comforts. Whence comes it then that their works of art sometimes display a bold, fantastic spirit, a disordered imagination? Time passes on and new peoples come under my observation; while the problems which at first seemed to me easy of solution are becoming obscure.

The preaching of Doxius among these peoples had not the success he expected; so when Epergos told him he wished to visit other countries, he made no objection.



CHAPTER XXII.

THE NAHUAS AND TOLTECS.

DIRECTING their course to the north-east, Epergos and Doxius for a long while traversed vast regions inhabited by men of the yellow race. But on advancing to the north, they reached the limit of the inhabited countries, and found themselves in the midst of icy deserts.

Having crossed an arm of the sea, they set foot on a new continent. For a long time they pursued a descending course towards the south along the western slopes of a long chain of desert mountains, when they reached a region of remarkable beauty.

There they found busy races of peoples, among whom civilisation had reached a considerable development.

They belonged evidently to two very distinct races, one very superior to the other and holding it in subjection. The inferior race, in some particulars, strikingly resembled the yellow race ; not that which then occupied Cathay, but the peoples settled in the great islands of the Pacific Ocean ; the superior race, whose skin was copper-coloured, was tall and robust, and pretended to a divine origin. It could not, however, be confounded with that of the Aryas, any more than with that of Ancient Egypt.

This vast country, wonderfully favoured by Nature, presents a great gulf on the side washed by the Atlantic Ocean, and is crossed from north to south-east by a lofty chain of mountains, whence flow numerous streams fed by great lakes.

The elevation of these mountains, and of the plateaus that form their base, causes a variety of climate. For, though the plains are extremely warm, the elevated parts are temperate, while the tops of the mountains are covered with snow. As there is no want of water in any part, the lower lands are immensely fertile. The peninsula, which encloses the gulf on the south, is the only part dried up during the hot season, for its mountains are of no great height; but deluging rains water this district during three months of the year, and the inhabitants have succeeded in constructing large tanks which preserve the water, or have hollowed out great caverns into which flow deep underground natural watercourses, which are hidden from view in the dry season.

These people are governed by kings and priests, who are versed in astronomy and sacred lore. The lower class are absolutely dependent, and are subjected to the most painful labours; for the country possesses neither horses nor beasts of burden, and the men of the inferior class are employed in the portorage of goods, and in all kinds of manual labour. They are gentle and submissive; whilst the chiefs of the various states that occupy this region are often at war with each other.

Epergos and Doxius found in these countries important cities, where all the arts had been long cultivated, and bore testimony to a civilisation of ancient date. Had this civilisation been developed in these countries, or had it been imported from abroad? It was evident that its sources were very ancient; for at the time when our travellers visited the country of the Olmecas and the Nahuas, they had proof that the buildings contained records of traditions already corrupted.

Epergos, inquisitive as usual, wished to learn the opinion of the priests and sages of the country respecting their

origin, and easily found an opportunity for satisfying his curiosity ; for these peoples are not hostile to foreigners, having never had occasion to complain of ill-treatment from them. One of these sages named Nimak, who discharged the functions of supreme judge at Uxmal (one of the chief cities of the peninsula), contracted a friendship with the travellers, and undertook to inform them of the origin of the Olmecas.

“In the beginning,” said Nimak, “all was immovable ; calm and void was the immensity of heaven. There was then neither man nor beast, no woods, birds, fish, stones, or valleys ; the heaven alone existed. The face of the earth was covered by peaceful waters. Nothing was connected ; nothing moved ; no sound was heard. All remained in darkness. The Creator, the Former, the Ruler, the Serpent covered with feathers, and the germs alone, were on the water. They concerted with each other and caused the earth to rise out of the waters ; on this earth they caused trees to shoot forth, the waters to flow and the mountains to stand erect ; then they created beasts, assigning its place to each : but these could not utter the names of the gods nor do them homage. Then they determined to create man of red earth ; but this was not successful, and the body was dissolved in the water. They afterwards made men of wood ; these spoke, reasoned, and reproduced their kind ; but they had not intelligence, and did not retain the remembrance of their Former and Creator ; yet they existed in large numbers on the earth. All the creatures rose against them and they were almost all destroyed. Their posterity may be seen in the little apes that live in the woods, because their flesh was of wood alone.

“There was little light on the face of the earth, for the sun was dim, and man was made of flesh ; he was proud of his power, and ruled over the apes and all the beasts..

When they had greatly multiplied, these men came down from the north in tribes, and occupied these countries, as also a great land situated towards the rising sun beyond the sea ; for they knew already how to make use of boats. But this great land was swallowed by the waters . . . and a flood destroyed all the cities of the Nahuas, leaving only a few men alive."

"You are certain of it ?" objected Epergos.

"Our writings say so," replied Nimak.

"Ah ! was not this land that was swallowed up Atlantis ?" said Epergos to his companion.

"Another fable of thy Greek friends," replied Doxius.

"I was thinking so," continued Epergos ; "but here are people who have never heard of Plato, and who yet relate the same story ; be so good as to continue, sage Nimak."

"Then the giant Cabrakou began to shake the mountains, to depress and to raise them ; but he was killed by Hunahpu and Xbalanqué, who were the first civilisers of men, and destroyed the power of Xiballa. Similarly in our time the Nahuas have conquered the Chichemecas-Quinames, whose tyranny they could no longer endure. It was they who rebuilt the cities of the Peninsula."

"And how were those cities built which existed before the conquests of the Nahuas ?"

"Their houses were rude and built of wood and unhewn stone joined by mortar."

"And who had taught those primitive peoples to build in that way ?"

"The conquerors of Xiballa."

"And who were these conquerors ?"

"Men of great stature and wickedness."

"And whence did they come ?"

"From the North."

"And whence came the Nahuas ?"

"Also from the North. They were and still are divided into tribes who elect chiefs, and who are masters of the Fox, the Jackal, the Parrot and the Crow, the Ant and the Toads."

"What are they?"

"It is thus that we designate the indigenous tribes that have been subjugated, and whose labour supplies us with all the necessaries of life. It is they who cultivated the white maize and the yellow maize which serves for food; it was they who once showed us the road to Paxil."

"Where is Paxil?"

"It is the fertile and marshy country watered by the tributaries of the Uzumaciata and the Tabasco, between the sea and the mountains."

"And it was by that route that the Nahuas came hither?"

"Yes; they came down from the North,—from countries where the tribes suffered greatly from the cold, and where they obtained the fire of the god Tohil."

"And for what consideration did the god Tohil grant fire to the tribes?"

"On the condition that they should sacrifice human victims to him."

"And do you continue to offer these sacrifices?"

"We do; for it was on this condition that we received fire and the principle of all life—the sun to warm all nature and to give us light. Those who lived before Tohil had been invoked, and fire obtained, were in darkness and ice."

"Well, but Doxius and I not long ago traversed dark and frozen countries and came southwards, just as your tribes did in former times; we have not sacrificed any human being to Tohil, and yet the sun does not refuse us either its heat or its light."

"Certainly, but the people generally do not look at things in that way: they must have a visible sign, and they expect nothing from the divinity if they offer nothing to him."

Besides, the sun is sometimes extinguished in the clearest weather, as if Tohil were threatening men that he would withdraw light and heat from them. He must, therefore, be implored since he threatens, and it was he himself who demanded human victims before our entrance into Paxil."

"Art thou certain of it, Nimak?"

"The sacred signs indicate it; and the signs can never deceive men, since they are exhibited in order to teach them the truth. Besides, it is certain that at the time of the deluge, which destroyed all men—except those who took refuge on the sacred mountain—there was a period of darkness which lasted twenty-five suns; and the human beings, and all the beasts that had not taken refuge on the sacred mountain, were changed into stone."

Epergos did not attempt to discuss these strange traditions, which greatly perplexed him; for in some points they agreed with those of other nations far remote from this country, and who could not have had, as it appeared, any connection with it.

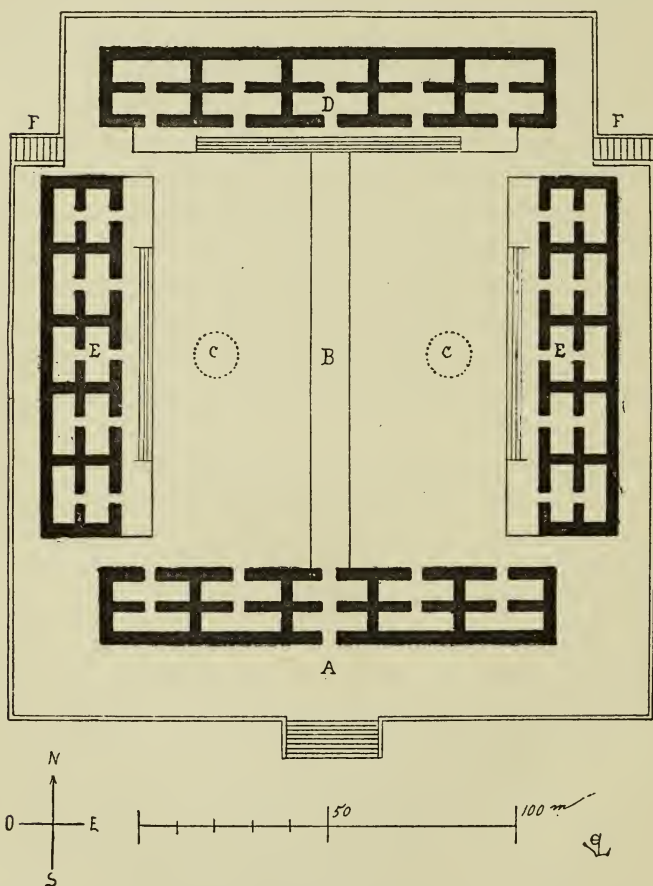
Some days afterwards, Nimak, at the request of our travellers, secured an opportunity of showing them one of the finest palaces of the city of Uxmal—the residence of its governor Nahualt.

It must be stated that these cities of the peninsula are very extensive, their streets wide and laid out in line, that the houses of the people are made of wood and clay, very low, and covered entirely by terraces which communicate with each other; so that while one may traverse its streets, one may also go through the city on these terraces. In many cases these houses are partly hollowed out in the ground to mitigate the heat.

At various distances, wide flights of steps, hollowed out in the rock, lead down to tanks or rivulets below, thus affording a supply of excellent fresh water. But at the close of

summer, these concealed but always abundant springs, which exist at a depth of thirty cubits and more, must be had recourse to.

The dwellings belonging to persons of distinction among the Nahuas are built on wide platforms, under which tanks are hollowed out in the rock, or built of stone and carefully



Plan of Nahuan Palace.—FIG. 84.

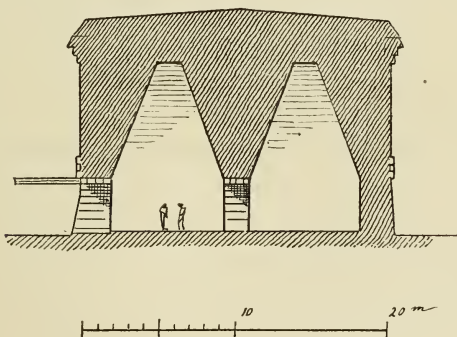
lined with a very hard cement. These palaces are all built of stone and are very sumptuous. Figure 84 gives the plan

of the residence of Chumucil-Chunil (Principal centre). It is situated at one of the extremities of the city, and is surrounded by gardens.

Near it is a *téocalli*, or great truncated pyramid, surmounted by a temple. The avenue which leads to the palace is wide, and overlaid with cement. It ends in a fine flight of steps giving an ascent to the platform and the principal entrance A, which passes through a building in front.

Next we have a great court B, with a cemented alley in the middle, along which are poles for the support of awnings. At the farther end of the court is the principal building D, raised some steps above it. On either side, at E, are two other buildings nearly alike. At C are the openings of the two great tanks which extend under the court. Cellars are also made under the main building to store provisions in. The noble owner lives in the range of building at the farther end. The three other ranges are occupied by the dependants and menials. At F are two descents leading down to the gardens.

These blocks of building, arranged in the same way,



Section of Nahuan Palace.—FIG. 85.

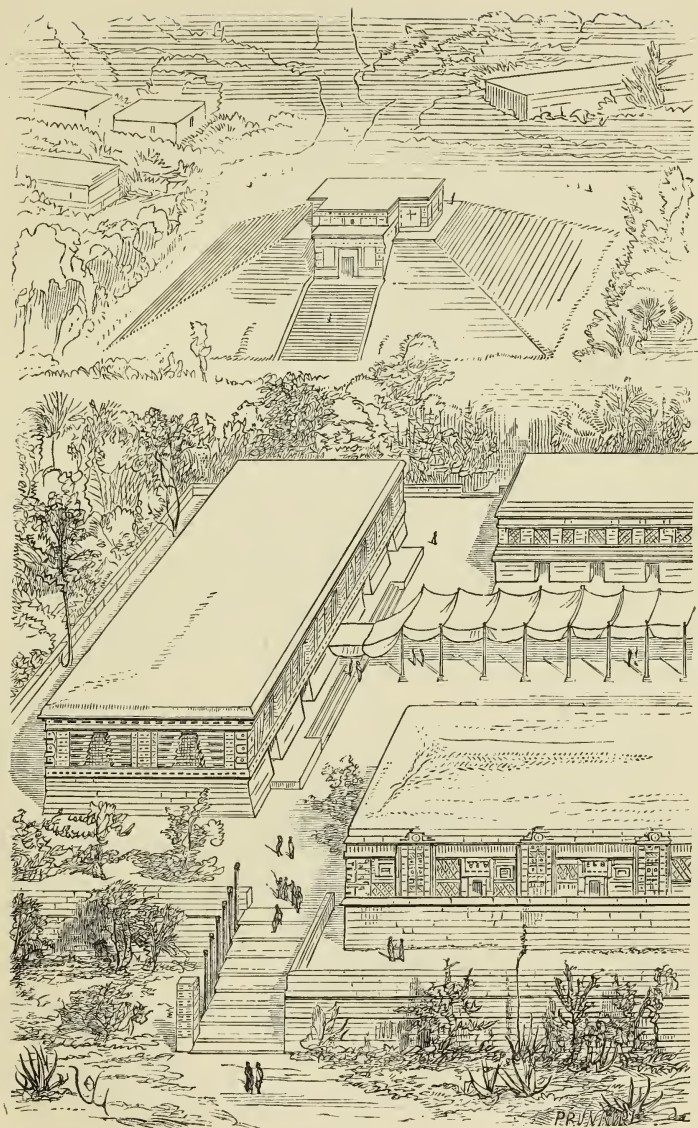
present the section figure 85. The structure consists of a great mass of rubble-concrete united by excellent mortar,

with stones exhibiting designs and carvings of the strangest description. The interiors, which are lighted only by the doors, are constructed with stone facings laid overhanging and supporting a narrow ceiling. These interiors are covered with paintings and hieroglyphics. The lintels of the doors are made of a very hard red wood of a durable nature. Two long beams projecting from the two sides of the principal doors are designed to support an awning for shelter. The roofs are terraced and cemented.

The aspect of this mass of buildings is carefully determined.

Figure 86 gives a bird's eye view of the main building, with the extremity of the two lateral buildings, the platforms, the secondary entrances, and the great *téocalli* close by, the gardens, &c. It will be observed that the central avenue is covered with awnings fastened to poles, and ending with the projecting shelter of the central portal.

This group of buildings did not fail to produce a lively impression on our travellers, for it is immense in extent, and covered almost completely with carvings. It seemed to have been the work of many generations, yet Nimak assured them that this palace had not taken more than four years to build. Epergos was astonished to find such a simple arrangement of plan with so advanced a style of art; the latter appearing to be even on the decline. He examined the façades of these ranges of building, which differed from each other, but were all very splendid. The exterior decoration of the principal range especially drew his attention; for it consisted of an imitation of wooden brackets, with trellis-work in the interspaces, although it was entirely of stone. Here there was doubtless the tradition of a structure of wood. At other points, billet-shaped stones, side by side in a vertical position, evidently represented an assemblage of trunks of trees close together.



View of Nahuan Palace.—FIG. 86.

But the façade of the western building especially attracted his observation, for above each of the doors was carved the most singular decoration imaginable (fig. 87); and, above the surbase, a wide frieze formed of alternate scrolls and trellis-work. Each stone, with its carving, had been placed like the pieces on a chess-board. Some of these enviroing stones above the doors were hieroglyphs, which Nimak explained to the travellers.

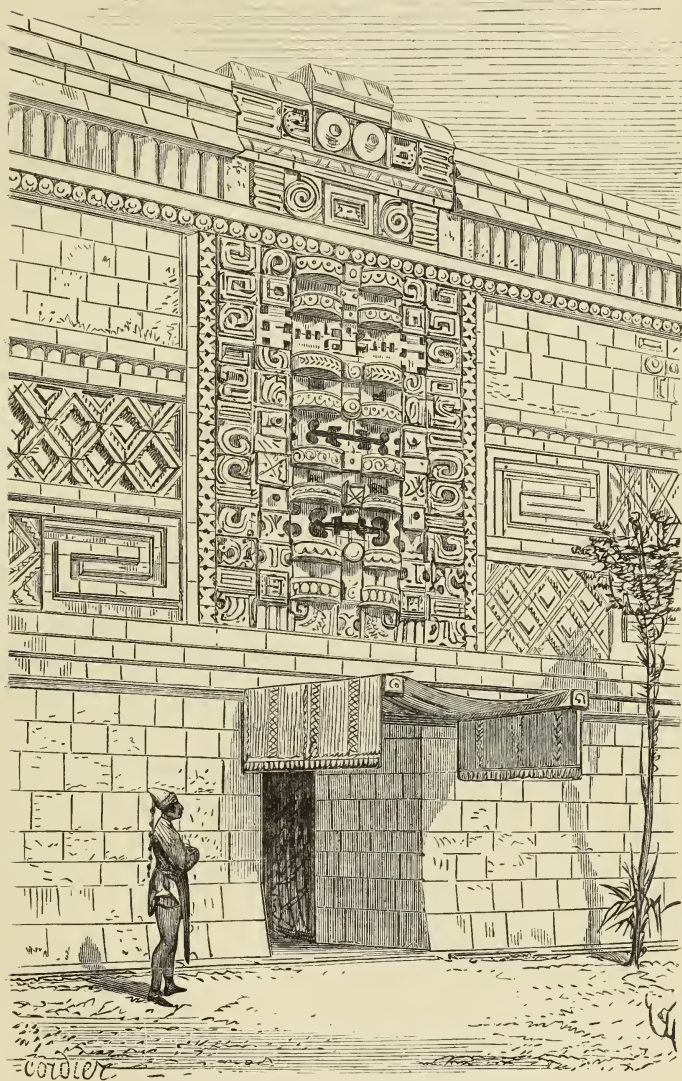
At each of the corners of the blocks of building were carved, one above the other, three enormous and grotesque heads.

Epergos, who remembered the productions of Egyptian Greek, and Indian art, surveyed all this with more astonishment than admiration.

Doxius, on the contrary, who had felt no great interest in the accounts given by Nimak, remarked an air of grandeur, power, majesty, order, and regularity that charmed him. It should be observed that all these carvings were relieved by painting which, at a distance, gave this decoration the appearance of a most magnificent carpet. In the interior, the pieces of furniture, made of wood, were likewise covered with these strange carvings and colouring, enriched with gold and silver. The furniture consisted of beds or very wide benches, with a great number of small tables, highly-ornamented stools, and vessels of terra-cotta, painted and gilded. The apartments occupied by the master and his family, differed from the others only in a greater richness and profusion of these pieces of furniture, and the stuffs with which they were covered; which were finely woven of wool, bark of trees, or fibre of aloes, while elsewhere mats replaced these stuffs.

What especially struck Epergos, was the absence of a room distinguished in size from the rest.

"Where are assemblies held?" he asked of Nimak.



Portion of Exterior of Nahuan Palace.—FIG. 87.

"Chimucil-Chunil, the master of the house," replied Nimak, "following the custom of the great men of the Nahuas—when he wishes to assemble a considerable number of persons,—and he never assembles any but his peers,—convokes them in this vast court. All our assemblings are held out of doors, at sunset or sunrise; for in the daytime the heat is too oppressive to allow of persons remaining thus in the open air. The closed apartments are used only for rest or for meals; every one takes his repasts at home. Or if we have meals in common, it is under tents: but that takes place only on certain solemn occasions—sacrifices for example. In ancient times the human victims sacrificed to Tohil were eaten, but this custom is abandoned. The viands are prepared outside by specially-appointed servants, and brought to each guest, according to his rank and quality."

"I understand; but the Nahuas did not bring this architecture and this skill in art with them?"

"No; the lower class of people that live in these countries were already advanced in the arts, when the Nahuas conquered the country; but what they produced was irregular and unworthy of the conquerors. The latter have brought these artisans to work voluntarily or by force, and so have had temples, cities, and palaces built for them, worthy of the race of the Nahuas. They have established rules for everything—buildings as well as the rest. They have appointed councils of sages, who are commissioned to maintain these rules, and to prevent any one from transgressing them. Thus the arrangements of dwelling-houses, even for persons of distinction, cannot be altered; for the law directs that they shall be exactly as you see. The sculpture itself is subjected to rules, which every one must observe. It is the same with

the style of building, and the construction of tanks and roads. When a building is undertaken, the master-builder gives each one his task. One cuts the smooth stones, another the carved stones, and each must finish within the day what is prescribed him ; then the master has these parts of the work put together in front of the rubble backing."

"I cannot help remarking," said Epergos, "that these stones, which are of pretty much the same size, are none of them bonded together, but are placed side by side, and one upon another without breaking-joint."

"These facings are held by the mortar of the rubble backing."

"But tell me, Nimak, do you not think that the principal building, though of stone, simulates a structure of timber?"

"In former times, buildings were in fact thus made of timbers, superimposed and corbelling out ; that is why we preserve this appearance."

"But what is the good of that, when the material has been changed?"

"Because we have seen ancient buildings thus fashioned, and we wish to preserve the remembrance of them."

"And why have you ceased to use timber in building your palaces and temples?"

"Because many of them were destroyed by fire ; and because they harbour serpents, ants, and all sorts of vermin. Only the poor now employ wood in their houses, and they are careful to plaster it with earth."

On returning to their lodging, Epergos said to his companion :

"Do not these nations appear to thee, Doxius, to have passed without transition from infancy to old age?"

"Why so?"

“Because these edifices we have been looking at are little removed in point of arrangement from a primitive state of things, and yet in structure and decorations present symptoms of decadence.

“That grotesque sculpture, monotonous in its profusion, and reproducing forms which do not belong to the mode of construction adopted, denotes an art corrupted before it was developed.

“This can only be explained by the tyranny of a superior caste over a population of craftsmen and artists already advanced in the use of arts, but who follow the dictates of blind unreflecting caprice. What shocks me in everything is the absence of reasoning; one seems to be in a dream. What then are we to think of the life of these grandees among the Nahuas or Toltecs who live in cells, all exactly alike, just as compartments for animals would be made? And yet these habits, which by implication are so simple, are accompanied by a prodigious exterior show of luxury—a luxury which is simply decorative, and has no concern with any real requirement. We have seen nothing like it on the face of the earth.”

Doxius looked grave and did not answer. He was asking himself whether these men would be in a condition to comprehend and accept the law of Buddha; for he was still inflamed with the apostolic zeal which had proved so unsuccessful in Cathay.

Doxius attempted, therefore, to preach to the people; but the chiefs and the Nahuatl priests gave his companion to understand, that if his proceedings were continued, they would be under the necessity of tearing his heart from his bosom, as an offering to Tohil; and Doxius took the hint.

They, therefore, diverged westwards, to the shores of the Pacific. There they found populations of harmless disposition, of whiter skin than the Nahuas, subjected to

a sacerdotal government, and who appeared to belong to a purer branch of the same race. In this country, as in the peninsula of Yucatheca, there existed an inferior class,



Peruvian House.—FIG. 88.

brown-skinned, short, robust, and subjected to labour of all kinds.

The ordinary habitations of the country consisted of a walled inclosure built of unhewn dry stones, covered with

trunks of trees laid close together horizontally, and on which was compacted together a thick bed of earth mixed with gravel and carefully plastered (fig. 88).

The doors and windows of these dwellings were formed of two stones meeting at the top ; the interior, divided into two or three compartments, gave shelter to a family.

Despite his regard for authority and dislike for discussion, Doxius himself experienced an excessive weariness amidst these inert populations. There also he attempted to preach ; they listened or appeared to listen to him, but his words glided from their minds like water on polished marble. He felt that his labour was thrown away ; and, contrary to what was generally the case, it was he who persuaded Epergos to make a move, and to quit this continent.

Beneath this lovely sky, and amidst scenery of enchanting beauty, Epergos began to meditate on all he had seen. To him this country seemed like a garden formed for restful ease ; he reviewed his recollections and let the days glide by, looking at the flowers in the fields, and the sky through the foliage, listening to the countless voices of the forest, and asking himself whether he had not found the Elysian Fields of the Greeks.

When Doxius informed him of his wish to quit this land, Epergos smiled and contented himself with answering :

“Let us go !”



CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SCANDINAVIANS.

OUR travellers returned along the western shore ; then crossing countries occupied by lofty mountains, they bent their way eastwards through wild regions inhabited only by tribes dwelling in the midst of forests, and living on the products of the chase and fishing. Tall of stature and copper-coloured, they had no arts, and inhabited huts made of branches covered with leaves. Keeping along the shores of the ocean, which they reached again after passing a wide river, they came to countries of arctic climate, crossed an arm of the sea, and set foot on a land inhabited by men of dwarfish stature, olive tint, with hair black and straight, and repulsive features. Scattered thinly along the coasts, they lived in conical huts made of pebbles and earth, and covered with seal or rein-deer skins. They subsisted exclusively on fat and fish ; for the country produces nothing, even during the three or four months of summer, but grass and lichens, which serve as food for herds of rein-deer. Epergos and Doxius did not tarry long in these regions ; and having again crossed the sea, they reached the Scandinavian countries : thus, after a long absence, they found themselves, in the seventh century of our era, again in Europe.

Many changes had occurred in this part of the globe since their sojourn in Rome. The empire, reduced to a few provinces around Constantinople, had, in the West, fallen into the hands of barbarians who had come from

the north-east ; and in the East, had yielded to the hosts of Islam invading it from Arabia.

But in Scandinavia, — the land of the Danes and Northmen,—the travellers were out of hearing of these events. There they found a population remarkably active and enterprising, inhabiting a cold and sterile soil, and undertaking expeditions to the neighbouring coasts more favoured by climate. The young men passed their time at sea ; for they possessed the art of building strong vessels of considerable length, in which they did not fear to face the tempests. Even during the rough weather of Autumn and Spring they were seen preparing their expeditions. Then putting to sea, they would steer towards the coasts of Britain or the land of the Franks, enter the rivers, land unexpectedly in the neighbourhood of villages, abbeys, and towns, carry off everything that fell into their hands, and immediately re-embark to secure their booty.

They would often even stay on the coasts, in some lonely out-of-the-way cove ; and, taking advantage of the position, would fortify the heights, and swoop down like birds of prey upon the inhabited places.

Intrepid, formidable both in stature and vigour, and fearless of death, they were the dread of the coast population, who dared not attack them in their holds.

Their vessels then served them for dwellings (fig. 89). Left dry on the shore at high tide, with the help of masts and oars the sailors formed a sort of roof over them, on which were stretched two triangular sails, for they had always one to spare.

When they had acquired booty enough to satisfy them, they betook themselves to sea again and returned home.

In their country there were towns whose houses were built entirely of pine wood, which was very abundant on the mountains.

Epergos was not a little surprised to find in these habitations the structural elements observed by him, and even improved under his direction, many centuries before on the Upper Indus. But the habit of building vessels, acquired by the inhabitants, had introduced considerable improve-



Norman Boat.—FIG. 89.

ments in the execution of these timber houses. The framings were carefully and strongly joined; some were even ornamented with carvings bearing a rude resemblance to those which decorated the buildings of Northern India. It was the same with the woven stuffs fabricated among

them ; their colouring and designs incontestably resembled those of the fabrics woven on the slopes of the Himalayas.

The religious beliefs of the Scandinavians also resemble the earlier beliefs of the Aryas. With the latter, they imagine that the men who are the bravest and most distinguished by their noble actions on earth, are elevated, beyond the tomb, to the rank of gods ; that is why they do not dread death, but even seek it in some glorious exploit.

They sacrifice human beings to propitiate the gods, and the males of beasts. The body of the victims is suspended in the sacred wood near the temple of Upsal, not far from the town of Birka, and the trees composing this wood are regarded as sacred.

They acknowledge the authority of military chiefs or kings, and have among them noble families descended from heroes.

These kings do not exercise a despotic authority, but are obliged to assemble and consult with the most illustrious of the nobles before engaging in any enterprise.

The men of Scandinavia unite with this courage and intrepidity which nothing can daunt, a love of gain, and extraordinary cunning. All are skilled in discovering the means of eluding the most solemn oaths, if the fulfilment of them is prejudicial to their interests. With a view to this there is no subterfuge or finesse they will not employ. Those who reckon upon their simplicity, and the *naïveté* of their manners, to entrap them in any way, are infallibly ensnared themselves ; for their penetration equals their ambition, their rapacity, and their prudence.

Like their Aryan ancestors, it is their custom to build a great hall in their dwellings, in which they assemble their equals and retainers. There they deliberate, settle differences, and give banquets which are prolonged for several days and nights, and which frequently issue in brawls.

If an expedition to a neighbouring territory promises great results, they select, as we said above, some unfrequented beach, commanded by a promontory or peninsula at the mouth of the river, and there fortify themselves so as to have a place of refuge and defence in the event of a failure, until another expedition comes to their relief: hence they are very careful always to keep themselves in communication with the sea, which secures them and their booty from all pursuit; for no other people is so inured to a maritime life, or capable of crossing the sea so rapidly, as these men of the North.

The habitations of persons of distinction among them consist of a group of buildings of various dimensions and uses, arranged without symmetry, but with reference to the convenience of each. The most extensive of them resemble villages; for each apartment—or nearly so—is a house, small or large, according to the requirements. These houses are either in juxtaposition, just touching at one point, or apart, in which case they communicate by very low wooden passages.

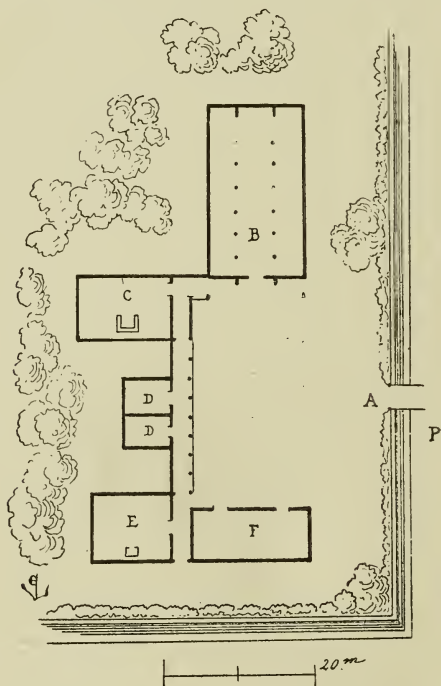
Roofed with pine shingles or slabs of schist, these dwellings are of one floor only, and are often even partly sunk in the ground to secure the inhabitants more effectually from the cold. Palisading, hedges, and ditches surround the dwelling, for the men of this country are very tenacious of their independence; and even the towns rather resemble an agglomeration of establishments, each with its inclosure, than a collection of houses in juxtaposition along the highway. To prevent the accumulation of snow upon the roofs, they are made very steep.

The Scandinavians breed horses, and are good riders. The broad meadows of their country supply forage for these animals, which are, moreover, inured to hardship.

In their maritime expeditions they do not hesitate to

take their horses with them in their capacious boats, and they carry off those which they meet with in the country they invade ; thus they readily form bands of formidable cavalry, falling unawares upon the hamlets they pillage, and then retiring and rejoining the main body of their armed force.

Figure 90 gives the plan of one of the above-mentioned detached habitations. At A is the entrance, a foot-bridge



Plan of Scandinavian House.—FIG. 90.

across a fosse, on whose escarpment is planted a quickset hedge. At B, is the great hall, whose roof is supported by a double row of posts.

A wooden porch gives access to a hall C, in the middle of which a hearth is constructed. It is there that the

family stay in winter, and the viands are prepared. The inhabitants even sleep in these apartments during the severe cold. At D, are the living rooms of the family during the temperate season. At E, the hall reserved for the servants and for strangers. At F, a large stable and barn for forage.

Figure 91 presents the view of this habitation from the



View of Scandinavian House.—FIG. 91.

point P. The openings which light the apartments are filled in with perforated wood, presenting fanciful designs. To prevent draughts, sheets of talc, in the dwellings of the

wealthy, or of asses' skin in those of the poor, are fastened on the insides of these openings, admitting a dim light.

The smoke escapes through wide openings left in the roof, and sheltered by a kind of movable louvre, which is lowered at pleasure to close the orifice.

As previously mentioned, the roofs are covered with shingles of pine-wood overlapping like scales, or in some districts with large slaty stones.

The timbers are painted in very lively colours forming interlacings. The elders among the Scandinavians assert that the dwellings of their forefathers were circular.

The Scandinavians have a great regard for trees, and their habitations are surrounded by them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GAUL UNDER THE MEROVINGIANS AND CARLOVINGIANS.

IN Gaul the empire of Rome survived only in memory. This large and beautiful country had been invaded by the hordes from the north-east, which, first assuming the character of allies of the empire, had gradually settled by permission or by force, in the basins of the Meuse, the Marne, the Oise, and the Seine, in the country of the Senones, afterwards on the Loire and in the Southern provinces.

These immigrants brought with them none but the vaguest traditions of art, and handicrafts very inferior to those of the Gauls. In the course of two centuries, mingled with the peoples of Gaul, they had been converted to Christianity ; but they did not the less keep up their incessant struggles with each other, by which the latter days of the empire had been ensanguined.

Divided into tribes attached to their several chiefs, these barbarians, nevertheless, in accordance with the customs which had been for ages preserved among them, had not settled in the Gallo-Roman towns, but in the rural districts ; thus forming isolated and independent groups, and recognising at first no other authority but that of the chiefs whom they had chosen.

The ancient Roman *villæ* were adapted to this kind of existence ; they were accordingly occupied, and these barbarians took possession of the lands surrounding them ; endeavouring to extend their borders at the expense of weaker neighbours.

Thus it came to pass that some of them acquired a marked preponderance, and set up as petty sovereigns, making war on their own account, with the aid of the inferior chiefs who were their vassals, their retainers, and the *coloni*, or cultivators of the soil which they had appropriated. The Gallo-Roman unity was, however, sufficiently compact to oblige the new owners of the soil to reckon with it. That splitting-up of authority was disliked by the nation, and the ablest of the Frank chiefs, supported by its traditional tendencies, succeeded in having themselves proclaimed kings by their peers. While, politically, Gaul was thus able to recover a part of the Roman organisation, the chiefs who governed it made no change in their habits, but resided almost always away from the centre of population. The power which those first kings had arrogated to themselves was incessantly contested, and was with difficulty transmitted.

Dagobert was the first who—relying on the support of men of the free class, and of the nations which cherished the recollections of the prosperous times of the empire,—attacked and vanquished the great vassals, and could regard himself as sovereign.

It was at this epoch that Epergos and Doxius landed on the territory of the Franks. Doxius had had time to forget his dislike of Christianity. The mythical Aryan traditions of which the Scandinavians had preserved only rude remains, appeared to him no longer able to sustain themselves.

On the other hand, the confusion which prevailed in Gaul among the nations that had remained Gallo-Roman and the new rulers, and the ruin of that Imperial organisation which he had once so greatly admired, had brought new light to his mind. Perceiving the determination with which some of the bishops of Gaul struggled to maintain, amid this

dismemberment of society, what remained of civil liberties, law, morality and civilisation, Doxius did not hesitate. He became a Christian, and an enthusiastic one. His new convictions soon became tinged with the somewhat intolerant spirit natural to him.

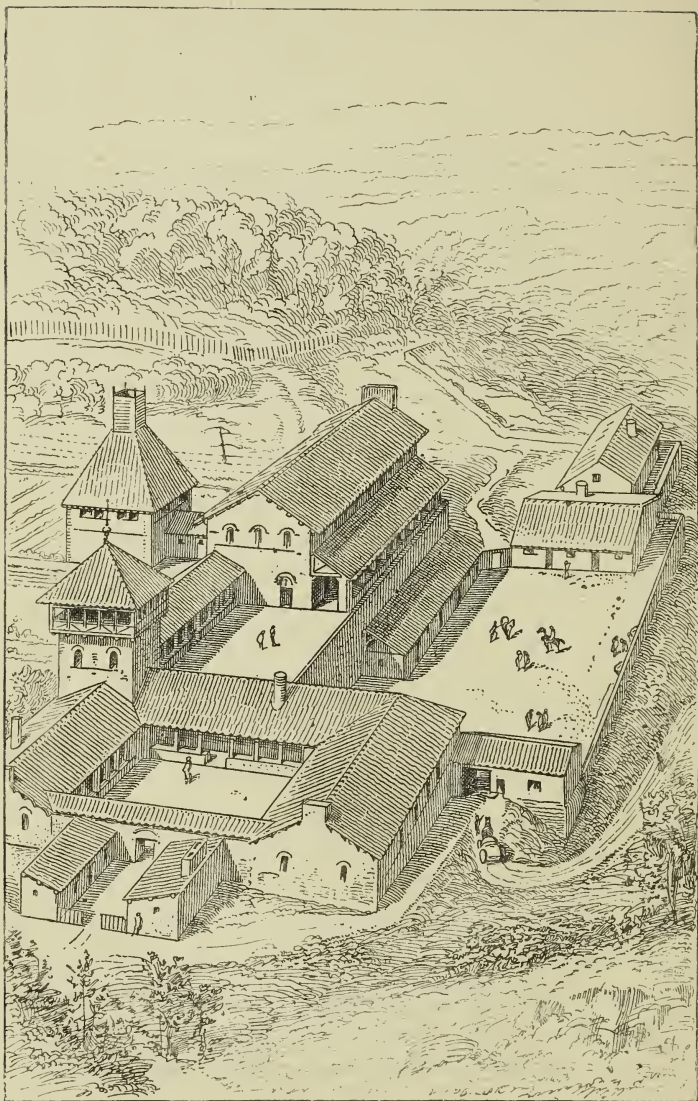
Epergos, according to his wont, contented himself with observing ; not believing in anything as fixed, but seeing in every phase of humanity only a transition towards a worse or a better condition. Our two companions were further than ever from agreeing. Doxius saw no salvation for society except in the establishment of a theocratic *régime* ; and denounced the obstacles which the character of the warrior chiefs, and the Romanised spirit of the people were bringing to bear against it. Epergos was continually rallying him on this subject, proving to him by facts of daily occurrence that the influence of the bishops over the people at large and the higher classes increased in proportion as they confined themselves to their pastoral functions and did not aspire to power. Besides, those great Frank vassals and Dagobert himself, Christian as they were, could not be said to observe the moral precepts of Christ.

They had slaves, and as many wives as they could keep ; they displayed a barbarian ostentation, and, if they gave to monasteries and churches with one hand, they pillaged churches and monasteries with the other.

The royal court presented a strange spectacle ; there were to be seen persons distinguished by their sanctity side by side with courtesans, favourite slaves and ruined vassals, living at the expense of the prince ; and envoys of courts mingling with vagabonds ready for every crime.

Devotion and debauchery were equally conspicuous, and there was but a step from the altar to the scene of riotous dissipation.

Dagobert habitually resided in his *villæ*, sometimes in



View of Merovingian *Villa*.—FIG. 92.

one, sometimes in another, till the provisions accumulated in those great agricultural centres were consumed. Doxius, full of the zeal of a neophyte, had been taken notice of by Eligius, a man of sense, a skilful worker in gold, a sincere Christian, and favoured with the confidence of the king, whom he continually attended. The knowledge possessed by Epergos was also appreciated by Eligius, who was curious in all matters pertaining to art and handicraft. Our travellers were, therefore, invited to go to one of those royal *villæ* to spend a few days with Eligius, who wished to present them to Dagobert as distinguished personages who could give him information respecting the northern countries.

The *villa* in question, figure 92, situated on the slopes of a hill, not far from the banks of the Oise, was surrounded by woods abounding in game, in which the king and his court often hunted. Notwithstanding its extent, the exterior aspect of the dwelling was very simple, and reminded them of Gallo-Roman establishments of a similar kind. The principal entrance closed by palisading, consisted of a court of no great size, with two buildings containing the porter's lodge, and some waiting-rooms for strangers. This led into a second court of larger dimensions surrounded by low wooden porticos, fronting the apartments of the persons directly attached to the prince. At one corner of this court is a square tower four stories high. This is the special residence of the king. The upper story is only a covered platform, from which there is an extensive view. From the ground-floor of this tower there is a communication with the great hall by a portico which overlooks a third court. It is in this hall that the frequent assemblings and banquets are held. On one side, and joined to it by a passage, is an immense kitchen. On the other side, a portico running along the court of the stables, which are lower, with a special entrance ; and again,

beyond, a building allotted to strangers, with its special entrance.

These erections are built of small squared stones jointed with mortar. All the roofing is of timber, covered with Roman tiles. The interiors are coated with painted plastering and lined with rude wainscoting; the timbers are also coloured.

At some distance off is a large chapel, and next to this are the dwellings of the *coloni*, which are low, thatched, and mean in appearance. This is one of the smallest of the king's *villæ*, yet it contains accommodation for two or three hundred persons, including the household slaves and dependents—for the latter sleep generally under the porticos.

In the absence of the king, who was hunting, Eligius showed our travellers the various buildings constituting the *villa*. Their curiosity rather than their admiration was excited by what they saw, for they met with nothing that was new to them.

These buildings rudely resembled the rural houses of the Romans; and the ornaments that decorated their interiors presented a singular mixture of luxury and poverty. By the side of Oriental fabrics of inconceivable richness, with which the beds and benches were spread, were walls covered with barbarous paintings executed by the most unskilful hands. The woodwork and furniture were the spoils of plunder or relics from some ancient buildings; and they brought delicate works of art face to face with the productions of rude handicraft.

Eligius made a point of calling his visitors' attention to certain pieces of furniture decorated by him with plates of gold and silver, and which he thought very beautiful; but Epergos felt his attempted eulogiums stick in his throat, and Doxius said not a word, thinking this gold would have been more profitably employed in relieving the misery that

abounded. Eligius, who was a good-natured man, did not take offence at this lack of enthusiasm on the part of his guests,—though he intended to ask their opinion some time or other. An opportunity presented itself when they were at table. Epergos, addressing Eligius said : “Thou art too enlightened a man, Eligius, not to be able and willing to satisfy my curiosity on one point. . . . How has it happened that the arts of Rome, which had attained a high degree of perfection, have thus declined ? . . . For thou wilt have observed thyself that, among the works of art which this *villa* contains, there are none that can rival what the empire bequeathed to you. Thou wert showing me capitals and shafts of columns that came from a pagan monument, and admiring the purity of the work. . . . Why canst thou not produce the like ? How is it that the various articles, useful and ornamental, which thou hast shown us, are rude compared with what those pagans have left us and of which we still have specimens ?”

“Alas !” replied Eligius, “I have worked ever since my childhood in the hope of attaining that perfection which Roman art exhibits, and have been able to secure but imperfect results. Schools are wanting ; the disasters which Gaul has experienced have distracted attention from the practice of the arts. During a long period, it was as much as people could do to preserve their lives. And to what purpose would it have been to erect buildings or to fabricate furniture or jewellery ? Any dwelling that exhibited an appearance of luxury was plundered and reduced to ruins. Hence the artists and craftsmen of earlier times died without having a chance of transmitting their art or skill to the next generation. Ignorant, therefore, and unacquainted with any other calling than that of war,—and God knows, what kind of war !—they have fallen back into a condition of barbarism as gross as that of the hordes who

invade our country. It is but recently that we have been able to resume the arts of peace. The Frank chiefs are fond of luxurious display : they attempt to rival the pomp of the Emperors of the East. They must have splendid apparel and furniture, and jewels set in gold ; and they fancy that if they are covered with the precious metals in such quantity that they can scarcely walk, they are displaying their power and their love for the beautiful.

“But thou, Eligius, canst not be seduced by this coarse and obtrusive luxury ; and since thou hast the ear of the king, why dost thou not endeavour to show him that true dignity requires him to be simple in his apparel and dwellings, and that the grandeur of a prince consists in the perfection of the arts practised by his subjects ?”

“If thou wert to live some time among us, Epergos, thou wouldst know the extent of the evils by which Gaul is afflicted, and wouldst ask thyself—as I have often asked myself—whether this people are not a chosen race . . . since they have survived such an amount of shame and disaster.

“The hope of seeing Gaul rise again one day from its degradation sustains me in the midst of the trials we have experienced,—myself, most of all. I am witness here to a thousand reprehensible and criminal deeds. Christians in name, these people commit acts which pagans would have reprobated ; violence, cunning, and treachery predominate in the courts among those Frank chiefs who ought to give this people examples of wisdom, self-restraint, and respect for sacred things. All, in spite of the decrees of the Church, take a number of wives, reduce whole peoples to slavery, and freely indulge their passions ; prodigal and avaricious, sensualists and devotees, destitute of faith yet panic-struck by a portent, they appear alternately arrogant and humble, inebriate or penitent. . . . What can I do therefore ? Sprung from the people, I love the people, and close my

eyes to so much violence and crime that I may endeavour to relieve it when occasion offers. I am aware that what I can effect is but little; but little as it is, God takes account of it, since he sees that I cannot do more, and that my efforts are all directed to making the best of the generous impulses which I discover among our rulers. For you must not suppose that these men are inaccessible to virtuous sentiments; and when such arise in their hearts they give themselves up to them with the same passion as they display in the pursuit of evil. The king, in spite of so much that is perverse, often shows glimpses of a noble soul made to govern. God is my witness that I should infinitely prefer retirement to the part I play at court; but if from this heap of corruption I can sometimes extract a fine pearl, I am rewarded for my patience, which many deem guilty compliance. . . . Those who, full of zeal for the cause of God and justice, have assumed the part of bitter censors of our rulers' morals, have had only the empty satisfaction of unburdening their hearts; shamefully proscribed, persecuted, and even killed, they have had the glory of martyrdom, but they have not broken a single chain or alleviated a single calamity. I have thought it more beneficial to act otherwise. I therefore close my eyes to the evil, and seize every opportunity of doing a little good."

"But," objected Doxius, "thou art none the less in the enjoyment of the comforts and advantages which the confidence of the prince, and the rank thou holdest at court, secure to thee."

"Thou speakest like a novice," replied Eligius; "and hast never lived at court,—certainly not at the court of a Frank king. Know then that there cannot be a more irksome condition; to him who pursues the good, the splendours and pleasures of the court wear a veil of sadness; the most dainty viands are nauseous; sleep is disturbed by

painful dreams, and even the marks of the prince's favour surrounds us with thorns. He who only pursues his ambition, who seeks to supplant his rivals and to triumph in their humiliation, and who sees his wealth increased by the favour of his master, may, perhaps, enjoy days of frenzied pleasure too often followed by a bitter reaction; but for him who desires to preserve the purity and the independence of his soul, and who avails himself of the royal favour not to increase his wealth to the detriment of his rivals, but to promote justice and console misfortunes; to him there is neither rest nor joy: the good he accomplishes is never complete, for he has to rescue it from the thousand rapacious hands that clutch at every shred of it they can seize. If he perseveres in his endeavours and tries to secure the triumph of what he deems just, it is by blandishments alone that he can obtain the slightest favour. At court, while the most impudent solicitations on one's own behalf are thought perfectly justifiable, suspicion and hatred are the lot of him who asks that a wrong may be redressed; since every case of reparation unmasks a criminal who generally has the ear of the prince, and who will invent a thousand calumnies to ruin you. . . . If I had an enemy, Doxius, I would bring him to court and endeavour to gain him the prince's favour. . . ."



CHAPTER XXV.

THE SARACENS.

IN 827 Sicily fell a prey to Moslem invasion, and the Empire of Constantinople thus lost one of the finest jewels in its crown.

The Saracens, as the invaders were then called, far from ravaging the country and pillaging the towns, introduced into the island an advanced civilisation, and succeeded in establishing various branches of industry which enriched the country ; especially the fabrication of those beautiful silken tissues inwoven with gold and silver which were then in demand throughout the West. They divided the island into three valley districts administered by cadis, under the government of a supreme chief who resided either at Messina or Palermo.

Greek and Roman art in Sicily had fallen, under the last emperors of the East, into the lowest stages of decadence. The Saracens resuscitated these arts, though giving them a new direction, and without in any way imitating the remains of ancient buildings still extant. They brought with them methods of construction then in use in Egypt, and on the coasts of Africa, of which they had been masters for three centuries.

Palermo, Messina, and Catania were beginning to recover from the degradation into which the government of the Eastern emperors had allowed them to fall. The ancient walls were repaired, roads were opened, aqueducts were bringing the water from the mountains into these cities, and sumptuous palaces and mosques were replacing the ruins

caused by the devastations of the Vandals, by time, and by the carelessness of the inhabitants who were distracted by dissensions. Nevertheless, the population of the country districts, and even of the cities, preserved their customs and religion without interference from the Aglabites, or the Fatimites who succeeded them.

Contrary to the habit of the Christians of this period, the Mussulman power did not persecute the conquered peoples on account of their religion ; but contented itself with exacting from them an absolute submission to authority, and a tax. They were allowed to preserve their form of worship, on condition of not making a display of it outside their temples.

Saracenic buildings and Christian churches and dwellings were therefore to be seen side by side in the cities. Two peoples might be seen in juxtaposition, as it were, living each in its own fashion, devoted to manufactures and commerce, under an arbitrary but wise and prudent authority, and not supposing that there was any advantage in obliging people to believe in this or that dogma, provided they fulfilled their duties as citizens and lived peaceable lives.

Epergos and Doxius visited this island about 1050. It was at the height of its prosperity, and was exciting the cupidity of the terrible Normans who were already installed in Italy, where they had been warring, sometimes as mercenaries, sometimes on their own account, since the year 1035.

Since the time of their conversation with Eligius, our travellers had had many adventures, and—to mention only the principal—Epergos had been entrusted with important missions in the East and in Spain by Charlemagne, who set high value on his extensive knowledge. He had been commissioned to bring to the emperor's court certain Greek and Arab manuscripts, and to translate them with a view to

promoting in the monasteries the study of the sciences cultivated among the Orientals, and teaching geometry, the art of making conduits for water, improving the land, cultivating fruit-trees, building, and painting, in conventual establishments. Thus during nearly the whole of Charlemagne's reign, Epergos had been fully occupied, and had had but little intercourse with his friend Doxius,—the latter having retired into a convent and disapproving the novelties introduced by the emperor.

“It so happened that Christianity,” Doxius would say to him when they chanced to be together, “was introduced into the world at the moment when the Roman Empire, tottering to its fall, was yielding to the onslaught of the barbarians. It is this that proves the divinity of its origin. God thus clearly showed that He reprobates, as a deviation from the course traced out for humanity by Him, those civilisations which have been so greatly admired by thee, but which all end in the most abject corruption. Has not His Son said, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit!’ The field was clear; primitive man, like a mighty river overflowing its banks, was beginning to inundate the lands in which tares had been sown broadcast. ‘Behold my law, simple and comprehensible by all intellects,’ said Christ; and his Father soon proceeded to diffuse over the ancient world those primitive natures which alone could accept and follow it. Is it not opposing the decrees of Providence and running counter to its manifest intentions, thus to endeavour to knit again the broken threads of the pretended science of the ancients, preserved among nations who are evidently instigated by the spirit of evil? The emperor goes to fight against the infidels, yet he asks from them those elements of pride and of knowledge by which men have been ruined. And thou, who knowest whither this vain science leads them, art not content with obeying the orders of the prince, but must

encourage him to give them ; it is ill done. The unrest of Satan possesses thee ! ”

“ Come, come ! my good Doxius, don’t be angry. If I have devoted my services to Satan—who, however, has not done me the honour to acquaint me with his intentions—thou art well aware that this is nothing new ; what wouldst thou have ? Thy vocation is to stop the terrestrial machine, mine is to aid it in its course ; what is the use of disputing ? *Au revoir* : I am off to Bagdad ! ”

At a later date, Epergos had been present at the invasion of the Frank territory by the Normans ; he had had another glimpse of those rude, cunning, rapacious, grasping, unbelieving men : he had recognised his former acquaintance the Scandinavians, who were endowed with a powerful and persistent energy ; and would reply to Doxius, who was then lamenting over the burning of the convents and the pillage of the towns : “ But, friend Doxius, of what dost thou complain ? Is not this the latest surge of that flood of barbarians raised by Providence, and which is invading the soil cultivated anew by us ? Your convents were too rich. We had taken too much advantage of the knowledge which the renowned Charlemagne wished to diffuse through the West. Thou wert blaming him then—that famous emperor—for sending me to the East to search for the remains of the ancient civilisations and of the school of Alexandria. Probably thou wert in the right ; since we behold primitive men coming to destroy our work—with the permission of God, doubtless. Observe some occasional shortcomings in thy understanding, respected comrade. Now thou sayest that these Normans are the emissaries of hell, because they are driving thee from thy convent, and destroying what we had been able to accomplish,—in thy opinion, at the instigation of Satan ! ”

Whenever the discussion took a turn of this kind, Doxius

always began a volley of vituperation, and Epergos left the field whistling on his thumb-nail.

When fairly established on Frankish soil, the Normans had shown themselves in an altogether different character.

As soon as the land became their own, they took good care not to leave it fallow ; in fact, they had it cultivated, gave themselves to the breeding of cattle and horses, built good fortresses to protect the country, entered upon commercial relations with their neighbours, amassed wealth for which they found a useful employment, and having been converted to Christianity, constituted themselves the zealous defenders of the Church as far as it did not interfere with their interests. The province they occupied soon became one of the richest and best governed in France ; but as the population continued to increase, they were obliged to seek their fortune elsewhere. Normandy was not extensive enough to feed so many, especially as they had good appetites. Having lost none of their energy, and finding themselves straitened in the quarters they had secured for themselves in Gaul, they endeavoured to pass their limits, and so came in contact with populations equally pressed,—a game at which as much might be lost as gained. As a prudent and practical race, and knowing how to calculate chances, they therefore remained comparatively at peace on their frontiers, and sent those who could not find support on the soil to carry on war at a distance. Thus bodies of partisan warriors betook themselves to Italy, hired out their swords to the various competitors for its possession, and at last began to fight on their own account, and settled in Apulia.

It need not be said that Doxius had felt conciliated towards them as soon as, instead of plundering the convents of others, they set themselves to build convents for monks of their own.

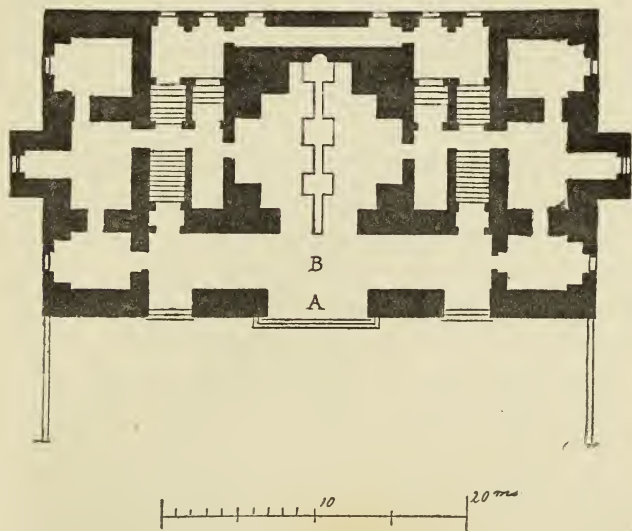
Our travellers had seen the Normans in Italy, and knew how they comported themselves; there as elsewhere employing stratagem or force, as occasion suggested, to accomplish their ends; terrible destroyers of the property of others when they had no hope of making use of it, but excellent guardians of that property when they had the prospect of turning it to advantage. They knew that it was the wish of the Normans to seize on Sicily some time or other, for this fertile country promised to satisfy their enormous appetite.

Epergos, who had not ceased to keep up his intercourse with the Saracens, had letters of introduction to one of the wealthiest inhabitants of Palermo named Moafa. He was a man of probity, greatly esteemed, and already advanced in years. He lived in a palace not far from the walls of the city, in a charming vicinity.

This residence consisted of a large pile of building, several stories high, substantially built of dressed stone, and completely surrounded by gardens. According to custom, certain slightly built erections, at some distance from the palace, furnished dwellings for the servants, kitchens, baths, stables, and porticos to receive strangers, with small chambers adjoining.

Figure 93 presents the ground-floor of the plan of this palace. A wide opening A gives entrance to a long vestibule B, at the extremities of which are two apartments, one for the attendant who waits on persons coming in or going out, the other which serves as an antechamber to the apartments in which the proprietor receives strangers. Opposite are two rooms for the domestics. In the centre is a large hall, opening to the court, vaulted, with four recesses. In that occupying the centre is a marble fountain, from which issues a sheet of water which pours into a central channel broken by small square basins.

In the two lateral recesses are divans, and two doors communicating with the apartments at the side. There is a passage at the back for the servants, uniting these two parts of the palace. Two fine flights of stairs lead to the first story which occupies only the two extremities of the building; for the vault of the central hall rises as high as



Plan of Saracen Palace.—FIG. 93.

the floor of the second story. The first story is occupied by the women. The second story exhibits the same arrangement as the ground-floor, except that the great central hall opens at its two ends, looking out on the country. It is there that the master lives. Above are also some small rooms for the servants, and a terrace from which there is a splendid view.

From this lofty point, the city with its crenelated buildings, and the minarets of its mosques covered with mosaics set in gold—stands out against the azure of the

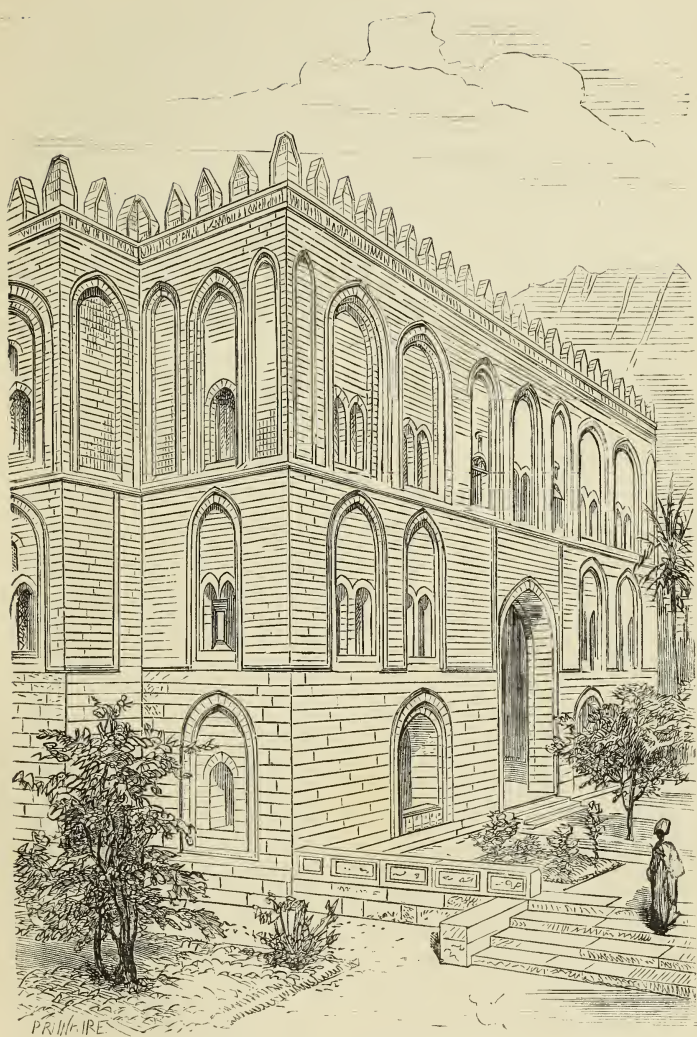
sea. On the left rises the abrupt mountain which forms a promontory, and where rocks of saffron-tinted white seem to emerge from a garden of olive-trees, palms, and fig-trees. On the side opposite to the sea the upper part of the valley presents itself, covered with the rich verdure of orange and lemon-trees, and terminated by a crown of broken peaks. At various distances lofty piles of masonry indicate the course of springs, the water from which is conveyed to all the habitations, and raised even to the top of the buildings by these siphons of masonry constructed at proper intervals to keep the water at an elevated level.

The gardens that surround the palace, of which figure 94 presents the exterior view on the entrance-side, are planted with artistic taste, and intersected by a number of small marble conduits in which clear fresh water is flowing.

The imposing mass of the palace, gilded by the sun and seen through the verdure, has a striking effect. Simple in construction, with no carvings, but with its parts skilfully arranged, it is decorated only in its upper part by a wide string-course, serving as a balustrade, occupied outside by a beautiful inscription in relief, and by battlements, whose denticulation, shining in the sun, sets off the azure glory of the sky.

Introduced into the gardens by order of the proprietor, and waiting at the palace gate, Epergos and Doxius were unwearied in their admiration of the order and smiling tranquillity of this residence, which contrasted so strongly with what they had just seen in the West. Doxius especially did not fail to extol the grave serenity of a scene so favourable to meditation, and which seemed to be a reflex of a perfectly well-ordered existence.

According to his wont, he did not omit, in dwelling upon this impression, to criticise severely the turbulent manners of those western nations whom he had just quitted,



View of Saracen Palace.—FIG. 94.

and among whom it was not possible, even for cloistered monks, to live in tranquillity.

"Well," said Epergos to him, when he had ended his comparison between these opposite social conditions,— "become a Mussulman!" Doxius was silent, but looked askance at his companion. A black slave soon appeared at the threshold of the portal and made a sign to the companions to enter.

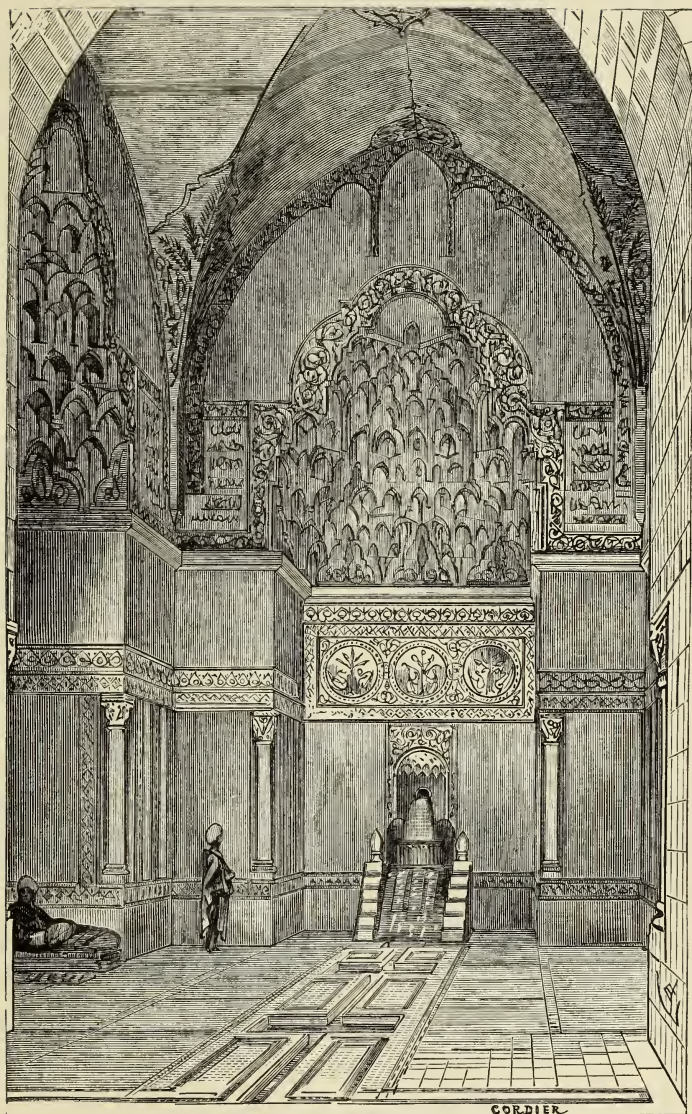
They left their shoes in the vestibule, and putting on the Oriental slippers that were presented to them, were introduced into the great central hall (fig. 95).

Above the fountain, on a gold ground, a delicate mosaic decorates the large niche.

This, like the two others, is terminated by corbellings of small arcades, which resemble the stalactites of certain grottos, or the cells of the pomegranate. Gold, azure, green, white, and black are distributed with the most harmonious effect in these myriads of cells. Painted arabesques form the borders of the vault, surround the tops of the niches, and blend with conspicuous inscriptions above the higher string-course.

The lower string-course is ornamented with fillets of mosaics which surround fine columns of white marble placed at the angles, and return on the plinth. The pavement is made of squares of marble alternating with mosaics. The water circulating in the conduit and the basins keeps up a delightful coolness in this tranquil abode, which is lighted only by the great opening that forms the entrance.

Moafa is seated, Oriental fashion, on the divan in one of the great lateral recesses, the front of which is spread with a magnificent carpet. Without rising he makes a sign to the travellers to take their places on the divan opposite to him; then taking the letters, he reads them in silence and deliberately while a slave brings refreshments.



INTERIOR OF SARACEN PALACE.—FIG. 95.

[To face page 338.]

The slave having noiselessly disappeared through the door at the back of the recess, Moafa, after a silence of some duration, said :

“ Which of you is named Epergos ? ”

“ I,” said the latter.

“ And who is the other ? ” added Moafa.

“ Doxius, my companion.”

“ Are you Christians ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ From the West ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ What brings you to Palermo ? ”

“ The fame of its industrial energy, the beauty of the country, and the wisdom of its rulers.” Then, after another interval of silence, Moafa resumed :

“ Christians do not travel to seek wisdom where it really exists, still less to imbue their imagination with the beauty of a country ; but to enrich themselves or to discover the vulnerable side of a nation, so that they may subjugate it by force or cunning.”

“ Possibly,” continued Epergos ; “ but we for our part are travelling for information, and have no armies at our back.” Then he related to his host some of the long journeys undertaken by Doxius and himself. The details of his adventures seemed to interest Moafa, who was listening attentively. When Epergos had finished, Moafa said :

“ Very good ; but thou art not a Christian ? ”

“ It matters very little to thee whether I am or am not a Christian. We are eager to learn, and we love mankind ; of which we have given proof by continually traversing the world in order to become acquainted with men, and to seek for what is good among them, that we may instruct the ignorant, or induce people to love what is good ; why shouldst thou seek to know more ? ”

“It is unpolite to ask such a question of one’s host, and my words should not give thee offence. But know that Sicily is infested by spies from Italy, which is in the power of the men of the North. We are obliged to be suspicious. Hast thou seen these men of the North?”

“Yes; I have lived among them.”

“Dost thou know anything of their projects?”

“I know that they are impelled by a boundless ambition and insatiable greed; that if they subdue Italy, they will wish to seize Sicily, then Africa, then the Greek empire, Syria, and the whole world.”

Silence intervening again, Moafa said, “If it is written! Great is Allah!”

“Wilt thou allow me, Moafa, to express my thought?”

“Say on. Imprudent words injure only him who utters them; it is for thee to know whether to speak or to be silent.”

“Well then; these men of the North do not believe that their destiny is written by the hand of Allah. Reckless and barbarous they always go straight on. Far from submitting to an overpowering destiny, they take upon them to force that destiny, by their presumptuous audacity, to submit to their desires. They go even so far as to believe that they can bring God himself to aid their projects, by dint of prayers and persistence.”

“If they are conquered, if their designs are frustrated, they say that is because they have been wanting in skill or courage; but they begin again, and never yield to Destiny. . . . The true believers, led by Mahomet, Omar, and their illustrious successors, were impressed with the belief that they were to conquer the ancient world, that “it was written;” and full of this faith in the words of the master, they spread themselves over Asia, Africa, and a part of Europe. They had an invincible weapon for war and con-

quest in the sacred word and the destiny traced out for them."

"But is it the same when—the limits of power having been reached—the only question is how to keep what has been acquired, if a check should occur,—an arrest in the development of that power? What Islam has acquired is menaced, is it not fatal to believe that Destiny has thus determined it, and that no human power can prevail against its decrees written beforehand in the Eternal Book? You have no doubt that the insatiable ambition of the men of the North is urging them towards your shores. What are you doing to prevent this invasion? Are you arming your cities? Are you constructing formidable engines to repel them? Are you stationing guards on your coasts? No; you are waiting till the hour of attack appointed by Allah has struck; then you will defend yourselves bravely, and will perish—if it must be so—beneath the ruins of your fortresses; but with the conviction that if this defence is unsuccessful it is because 'it was written,'—it could not be otherwise. . . ."

Moafa seemed to reflect profoundly; then after a long silence, smiling sadly, he said:

"But if it is written that Islam is to be driven back into the deserts from whence it first issued. The designs of Allah are impenetrable. We have sinned much; perhaps he may wish to punish us and take us back to our cradle, that we may renew our youth!" Epergos pressed the argument no further.

The travellers remained some days in this delightful palace, Moafa having allotted them two rooms belonging to the exterior buildings.

Their host seemed to take an increasing interest in conversing with them. He explained to them that their dwellings were erected by Sicilian workmen, under the direction

of architects educated in Egypt, that stone abounded in the country, and that these workmen being accustomed to employ it, these dwellings were constructed with that material on the outside, while they reserved the Oriental mode of building—that is, rubble-work plastered—for the interiors, which were covered with paintings, mosaic, and marble.

The architect of the palace, whom Epergos had an opportunity of meeting, proved to him that all his methods of setting-out were deduced from very simple geometrical formulæ, and that the vaults of the recesses in the great hall, so complicated in appearance, were drawn with the aid of methods that were easy to understand and to apply.

Epergos remembered that in Ancient Egypt he had observed the architects thus drawing their plans, and determining the minutest architectural details with the help of geometrical formulæ; and he asked himself the question whether these traditions had not been preserved in the schools of Alexandria, to be employed, though in the service of a very different style of art, by these Mussulman architects who, since the time of Omar, might be supposed to have been educated at Cairo and on the Lower Nile. He also verified certain relations in point of plan between this residence and the palaces of Asia and Persia in ancient times; and all this furnished occasion for considerable reflection.



CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FEUDAL PERIOD.

“SO then,” said Epergos to the host of the inn where he was staying in the abbatial town of Cluny, “thou thinkest we may travel as far as the Duchy of Lorraine without danger—my companion and myself?”

“I cannot say that, exactly; but if you will wait two days, our lord the Abbot, who is going to visit one of his great priories near the city of Epinal, with a large body of men, will be very glad of your company.”

“And how must we equip ourselves?”

“You must provide yourselves with a gambison,¹ an iron cap, and a strong cutlass, and present yourself before him as a couple of brave fellows. My neighbour, Michel le Boen, and myself will be security for you.”

“Well, what do you say to it, Doxius?”

“I say,” replied he, “that it is scarcely desirable to wear such harness.”

“Come, come! Did not I see thee donning the hauberk to fight the Albigenses no great while ago?”

“We are in a Christian country, and it is surprising that we cannot travel without this gear.”

“But what would you have? It must be so. I should not care about our being robbed—it would not be the first time; but it is of importance that we should not be delayed in our mission to Duke Thibaut. Let us go and see neighbour Michel le Boen.”

¹ A quilted leathern tunic.

The innkeeper conducted the travellers to Michel's house, and they found him in his shop. A comely dwelling is the house of Michel the woollen-draper, figure 96. It consists, on the ground-floor, of a large shop A, a parlour B, and a kitchen C, with wash-house and latrines at D. A straight flight of stairs opposite a door that opens directly on the street, conducts to the first story, which comprises the room E, and two bed-chambers. Above the small building D, rises a staircase mounting to the story under the roof where the apprentices are lodged, and which serves for a garret.

At G, a court lights the back part of the dwelling.

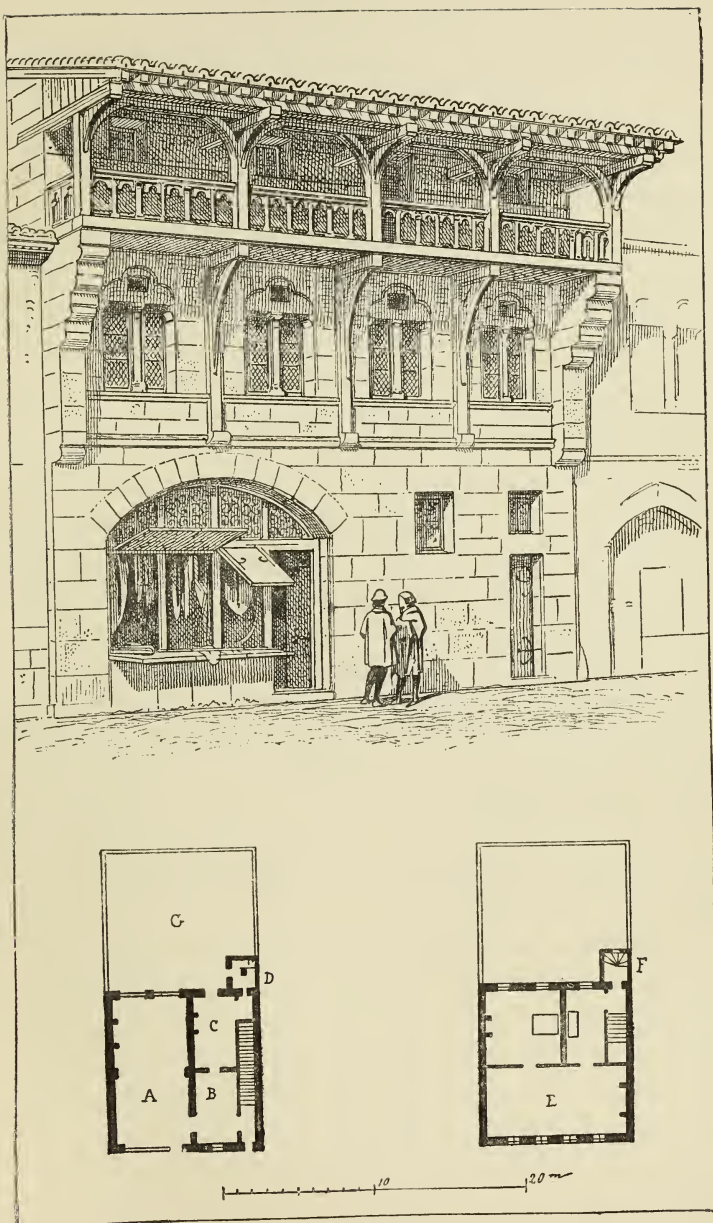
The street front of the house is of good dressed stone, like all the dwellings of the bourgeois of Cluny; with a wooden balcony covered by the roof, at the upper story.

Michel hastened to call his wife, when he knew the object of the innkeeper's visit, asking her to have wine brought into the parlour; and at the request of Epergos, he showed the travellers his house. The chief apartment—the room where the family assembled—was provided with a very large fireplace, and hung with serge; the ceiling, with the joists showing, was painted, and had a very gay appearance. Neatness reigned everywhere; for the mistress of the house, a good manager, knew how to keep things in the best order. Benches that served for chests, large oak cupboards ornamented with iron-work, and a large table round which were ranged stools, furnished the room and shone in the rays of the sun, which percolated through the thick glass bull's-eyes filling the windows.

Michel le Boen put his chaperon over his cotte, and all four set out for the abbey.

Two days afterwards, the cavalcade started. Epergos and Doxius covered each with a strong broigne,¹ armed

¹ A cuirass made of leather, covered with iron rings sewn close together.



House of a Bourgeois of Cluny (A.D. 1200).—FIG. 96.

with cutlasses, and with headpieces of iron, mounted on stout chargers, made part of the troop ; which consisted of a dozen monks, with the abbot at their head, and about fifty retainers of the abbey armed, besides our two travellers.

They were a lively party and went cheerily along, taking four meals a day. The cavalcade passed through Chalons-sur-Saône, Beaune and Dijon. They slept at the convents, starting again very early in the morning.

From Dijon they proceeded to Thil-Châtel, Isomes, Cherlieu, Luxeuil, and Fougerolles.

On leaving Fougerolles in the morning, to cross the mountains on their way to Epinal, about the third hour of the march, the troop met two young knights, well mounted, and followed by their squires. These knights seemed to be persons of high rank. Having understood that the Abbot of Cluny was in the party, they approached him and announced their names. The Abbot immediately saluted them ; for these two young gentlemen were related to him and were going to the court of the Duke of Lorraine, who had sent for them to settle some matters of inheritance, as they were his vassals.

About eleven o'clock the cavalcade drew up along a sloping meadow bordered by a wood, to rest the horses and to lunch.

They got down from their horses, and the provisions were spread on the green turf. The Abbot and the two young knights were under a tree a little way off from the main body, when all at once two armed cavaliers, with helmets on their heads and lance in hand, came out of the wood and stopped at a distance.

"What can this mean?" said the Abbot. "By the Holy Apostles! people don't go hunting thus accoutred."

The two youths, who were unarmed, had risen. One of

the two men-at-arms, his head covered with his steel helm and lance ready, advanced straight towards them. Addressing the young knight, he said :

“Are you not Hugh and Gerard de Favernay?”

“Yes,” replied Gerard ; and immediately the armed man, spurring his steed and lowering his lance, rushed upon him.

Gerard turned aside ; nevertheless the weapon pierced his shoulder, and the unfortunate young man rolled bleeding on the turf. Hugh’s esquire, immediately he saw the gleam of the helmets through the trees, had lost no time in putting a heavy sword into his master’s hands.

Epergos, who was not far off, seeing the treacherous onslaught of the armed cavalier, whose horse was still advancing with the impetus, rushing up, hamstrung the latter with a stroke of his cutlass, and laid it low.

The armed man rose, however, and drawing his sword advanced on foot towards Hugh, who, on his side, indignant at seeing his brother thus traitorously struck, was attacking the villain. The squires and the Abbot’s retainers arose, seized their arms, and confronted the second knight, whose lance in hand was remaining motionless at the edge of the wood.

The unknown assailant, cased in his coat of mail and his helmet protecting his head, grasping his sword with both hands, would infallibly have cloven Hugh’s skull to the very teeth, if the latter, attired only in a light cotte, had not eluded the blow.

The point of the sword was buried in the turf ; and seizing the opportunity, Hugh set his foot on the blade and striking the helmet of his assailant with his fist so as to throw him backwards, he thrust his own broad weapon into his throat. The stranger tottered and fell heavily to the

ground. Seeing this, the armed cavalier who had remained in the wood rode off slowly.

Hugh then returned to his brother, who had lost consciousness, and whom the Abbot and Doxius were endeavouring to revive :

"Dearest brother," said Hugh, "return to thyself. I have avenged thee,—thou art living, is it not so? What would our mother say if I were to return alone? Dear Gerard, it is I, thy brother; look at me!"

The wounded man opened his eyes.

"Thy wound is only slight: is it not so?" Doxius who was something of a surgeon, dressed Gerard's wound as well as he could; they lifted him on his horse and, his squire assisting him, the troop resumed its march in sadness.

"This is an unlucky adventure," said the Abbot, "and augurs no good. That other knight who allowed his companion to be killed without making a show of helping him!—A very unlucky adventure!"

Hugh, uneasy on his brother's account—who, pale and bleeding, could scarcely hold himself on his steed—and incensed at having been thus treacherously attacked on the domains of the Duke while he held a safe-conduct from him, was eager to reach the end of the journey. But the cavalcade were not so mounted as to allow of a quick march, and the mountain roads were bad. A secret presentiment, however, warned him that they must hasten.

"Yes, my son," said the Abbot, "we must reach the Duke's quickly. Ah! it is a sad mischance!" But the road seemed interminable. The Abbot, at Hugh's entreaty, decided not to stay at Plombières as he had intended, but to make his way by the cross-road to the Castle of Bellefontaine, where the Duke was then holding his court.

It was not till late that the troop perceived the keep of the castle. Immediately they sent forward one of the best

mounted esquires to announce the arrival of the Abbot of Cluny and the young vassals.

They were a good hour,—man and beast,—painfully climbing the road to the castle gate. The men on guard had been forewarned, and the whole cortege were allowed to enter the bailey. The Abbot with some of the monks, the two young knights, their squires, Epergos and Doxius, were the only ones admitted into the court. The Duke was waiting for them in the great hall, with the Duchess and her women.

The Duke accorded a gracious reception to his guests ; but the Abbot was evidently ill-at-ease.

“What ails you, Sir Abbot?” said the Duke. “Are you suffering from the fatigue of the journey: would you like to rest?”

And while the Abbot was stammering out a reply Hugh broke in—

“Sir Duke, we ask justice from you. Though provided with a safe-conduct from yourself, we have been treacherously attacked while resting on the journey, and without the least provocation, by armed men: one of them severely wounded my brother here.” And Hugh hastily raising Gerard’s cloak, showed to all his shoulder, whose bleeding wound had been but hastily dressed. The wounded man turned pale and tottered, for this movement on the part of his brother had disturbed the dressing.

“Par le sang du Christ,” exclaimed the Duke, “I swear that the author of this felony on my domain shall be hanged, were he a knight and as noble as myself!”

They hastened to Gerard’s assistance, and the Duke having sent for his physician, the latter declared that the wound was not mortal, but that the young knight must have long rest and every attention. The attendants of the

Duchess went for linen and cordials that the physician might dress the wound.

"But," resumed the Duke, when the first excitement was somewhat calmed, "tell me, Hugh, how this affair took place?" The young knight related everything in a straightforward manner.

"But why," continued the Duke, "hast thou not brought me the felon's head?"

"Ah! Sir Duke," replied Hugh, "I was so troubled about my brother's condition, that when I had laid the traitor low, I only thought of him, and left that cur's body on the spot."

"And the other man-at-arms turned his back?"

"Yes; our horses were unbridled, no one thought of running after him; besides, he was armed, and not one of us was so."

"Two traitors," said the Duke after a moment's reflection, "I shall know who they were; but we must send for the body of the one that is killed; we shall recognise him, at any rate."

At this instant a low murmur was heard outside.

"What is the matter now?" cried the Duke.

"It is Amaury returning alone," said one of the esquires.

"Amaury—my nephew,—where is he?"

"Here he is."

Amaury in fact was entering the hall, pale and agitated.

"Speak, Amaury, where is Charles, my son?" said the Duke with a choking voice.

"Dead,—killed, while we were hunting; his esquires are bringing him hither lying on his shield."

"Dead! Charles killed?—and by whom?"

"By this youth," said Amaury, pointing at Hugh.

"Ah, traitor!" howled the Duke, throwing himself upon

Hugh with lifted hand. But a knight of his court placed himself before him and arrested his arm :

“ Sir Duke,” said he, “ the young knight is of noble birth, you have given him a safe-conduct to come and visit you. Let him be tried ; if he is guilty, let him be condemned ; —nothing more, with your lordship’s permission.”

At the very commencement of this scene, the Duchess had rushed out of the hall. The body of her son—all stained with blood, lying on his shield and covered with branches—borne by four squires, had been placed at the bottom of the flight of steps. The Duchess threw herself on the body, and seeing the wide gaping wound, stretched out her hand as if to close it.

“ Oh ! my Charles ! my Charles ! ” said she. . . . The hearts of all present sank within them.

In the hall, Hugh, recovering from the first excitement caused by Amaury’s words, confronting the Duke, said :

“ Sir Duke, do not threaten me ; if I have killed him who wounded my brother and who wished to kill me, I did not know that it was your son. If I had known this, should I have come to your court, placed myself under your protection, and asked justice from you ? What is the use of threats ? Here I am ready to submit to the decision of your court.”

“ He speaks well,” said the knights ; “ but let Amaury say how the affair took place.”

“ Speak, Amaury ! ”

“ I will tell you the truth,” replied the latter ; “ and if I lie, may God curse me ! Yesterday evening, Charles came and asked me to go hawking with him ; but as I mistrusted Thierry de Langres, we set out armed. One of our falcons was lost ; so leaving our squires behind us, we hastened away to recover it. Coming out of the wood we saw a great number of people, and among them these two

youths who had got possession of the bird ; Charles demanded his falcon ; the one who was wounded refused to give it up. The quarrel became so violent that Charles irritated by the two brothers, struck one of them, and was in his turn struck by the other. If he dare affirm that I lie, here is my gage."

"Sancta Maria !" exclaimed the Abbot, "was ever such a falsehood heard ! I am ready to swear by the saints—and my monks too—that what this rascal says is a pure invention !"

"That is an important testimony," returned the Duke. "What is thy reply, Amaury ?"

"The Abbot may say what he pleases," replied Amaury. "I shall not take the trouble to give him the lie ; but I shall know how to force Hugh to confess his perjury."

"Well, Hugh !" exclaimed the Abbot, "why dost thou hesitate ? Offer thy gage, for the right is with thee. If thou wert conquered, which God will not permit, I would on returning from Cluny, sell all the gold of St. Peter's shrine !"

"Here is my gage, and this villain will be forced to tell the truth ; that I did not know whom I had killed, and that I was attacked without provocation."

"I shall require bail," said the Duke.

"My brother Gerard,—I can offer no other, Sir Duke since I know no one here."

"Hast thou forgotten me ?" rejoined the Abbot of Cluny. "I also will be bail for thee, and if thou art conquered, I say the Duke of Lorraine will be disgraced, were he to hang me and my monks."

"You are wrong, Abbot, to speak thus," said the Duke. "God forbid that I should do you any harm, whatever may happen. Say who are bail for thee, Amaury."

"Sir Duke, here are my cousins Huelins and Sewin."

"I accept them ; if thou art conquered, they will lose

their lands. Before my son is laid in the monastery, the combat must be terminated ; hasten therefore, and," said he, addressing the old knight who had stayed his hand, "Count William ! you will be judge of the fight."

The assembly having broken up, the body of Charles was taken up into the hall, which resounded with the sobs and lamentations of the unfortunate parents and friends of the young Duke.

Next day, the lists having been prepared at earliest dawn, the two adversaries heard mass at the monastery, and took the customary oath on the relics of the saints. Then the Abbot, having insisted on holding the stirrup for his young relative to mount, and having embraced him, retired to the church and betook himself to prayer.

The lists were pitched at the bottom of a dale below the castle ; and about ten o'clock in the morning, the barriers having been occupied by all the chivalry of the castle and the neighbourhood, the two champions appeared, after having been armed in pavilions set up for that purpose. Count William gave the signal for the fight.

"A very convenient method of rendering justice !" said Epergos to Doxius, during these preparations. "Amaury is evidently a wretch of the most contemptible kind. Yet instead of getting information and collecting evidence of which there was certainly no lack, since there were fifty of us who saw how the affair really occurred, they prefer trusting to the chances of a combat, which is equivalent to admitting that right is on the side of the strongest."

"God," replied Doxius, "cannot allow a lie to triumph over the truth."

"Well, but the Abbot of Cluny himself, abbot though he is, and who certainly has seen how this Amaury has conducted himself, and who is as much convinced as we are of the innocence of Hugh, nevertheless allows that his

young relative might be vanquished, since in his excitement he threatens to make the relics of St Peter pay for the damage if the right is not victorious."

"Dost thou prefer the verdicts of men? Did we not see how passion influenced those which the tribunal of the heliasts pronounced at Athens—thy favourite city? Did the judgments given by the Roman tribunals always seem to thee equitable? Had not the prætors their hands often stretched out to the oppressor to receive his money in return for a decree in his favour? And what dost thou think of those decisions of the cadis, which are based upon their feelings alone, and not on law?"

"After all," replied Epergos, "I like this style of trial by combat quite as well as that which was employed in the case of the heretics, when Simon de Montfort was in the domains of the Count of Toulouse, not long ago."—Doxius wished to be present at the combat. Epergos kept away, and the companions separated.

The Abbot of Cluny was soon sent for, as the vanquished combatant had a confession to make.

Amaury was that combatant: he was lying on the turf covered with wounds, with one hand nearly cut off; he was pale and bleeding, and his eyes were fast closing in death.

Count William and the barons were around him, urging him with questions; but he could only articulate a word or two. When the Abbot arrived, the dying man whispered something in his ear, and expired.

As for Hugh, he was scarcely in better plight than his adversary, and several times lost consciousness while they were carrying him to the monastery.

The result of this combat threw no light on the affair in which it originated, and the Duke was overwhelmed with grief and perplexity. Within twenty-four hours he had lost his only son, and his nephew, and had seen two of his

most powerful vassals wounded, one of whom was in deadly peril; he was bound by his word to confiscate the lands of two other vassals who had been bail for Amaury; and he saw his knights greatly excited and ready to recommence the contest, some as partizans of Amaury, others of Hugh. The Duchess overwhelmed with sorrow, and clinging to her son's bier, seemed to be losing her reason. What could he do?

On the evening of this second day, when all was silent in the castle, the unfortunate father summoned Count William to his room; and when he had entered, seizing the hands of the old knight he said, "Ah! Count! Count!" and sobbed violently.

Count William was a tall old man, still holding himself erect. Locks of white hair surrounded his bald and shining crown; and ever since his age had hindered him from wearing the gorget of mail and helmet, he had let his beard grow. White as the fleece of a lamb it fell in silken waves over his breast. His large clear eyes seemed to read one's inmost soul; and it was difficult to endure his look. He was dressed in a long brown pelisse lined with vair, over a silken doublet, closely bound to his waist by a girdle ornamented with silver bosses. Black hose covered his limbs which, though bony, were still firm and unbent. While the Duke, leaning his forehead on the knight's shoulder, was giving vent to his grief, which had been restrained or distracted till then, anyone who had seen the beautiful face of the old man would have been touched with admiration. How much did those noble features express! He also was weeping; big tears were gliding over his cheeks and wetting the hair of his lord; but what probity and mildness were nevertheless depicted in those moistened eyes! How many severe trials had left their imprint on these withered features without having altered their serenity and goodness!

"Come," said the Count at last, "Sir Duke,—my lord, return to yourself!"

"Yes, Count, yes: let us talk about the matter;" but he began to sob again. Then, when this storm of grief was a little calmed down, they sat down opposite each other.

"Count," said the Duke, "I have sent for thee; thy wise advice is more necessary to me than ever. Would to God that I had always followed it. . . . What am I to believe? What should I do? What resolution should I make? Did Amaury speak?"

"Amaury confessed nothing in dying; he only uttered a few incoherent words."

"I have been assured that he said something to the Abbot of Cluny."

"The Abbot of Cluny avers that these words had reference only to the state of his soul, and did not imply a confession of treachery. The Abbot is a man of God; he does not say what is untrue; besides it would be to his interest to declare that Amaury had confessed his felony."

"And what dost thou think of the matter, Count?"

"Sir Duke, Amaury is dead;—God rest his soul—and Charles is dead. The two principal witnesses of yesterday's transactions are wounded, and one of the two is perhaps dead at this very moment. But fifty other persons, without reckoning the Abbot, who is a man worthy of confidence, saw what took place; and those whom I have interrogated separately have exactly corroborated Hugh's account. The two aggressors, Charles and Amaury, were armed; they had helmets on, which prevented their faces from being seen; they were alone, and no one has testified to the presence of any attendant. I have enquired of their attendants also, and they assure me that Amaury had given them orders to wait for them in the middle of the wood."

"But what interest could Amaury and my son have in going and attacking these people,—supposing what Hugh says to be true?"

"Only one of them had an interest in doing so, and that was Amaury."

"How so?"

"All who testify to what happened yesterday agree in declaring that, of the two armed knights, only one made an attack, and that the other was only a spectator; Amaury himself, in his account, did not state that he took part in the struggle."

"Amaury then instigated Charles to this felonious attempt? . . ."

"Sir Duke, allow me to finish. Hugh has told us that one of the knights, before attacking his brother, said distinctly: 'Are you not Hugh and Gerard de Favernay?'—and upon Gerard's replying in the affirmative he charged at him with his lance. The Abbot told me exactly the same thing, as also the envoy Epergos, who is in his train, and who was present;—a man of great intelligence and prudence, in my judgment—and who gives a clear account of things. Charles, therefore, must have had an interest in putting these two brothers out of the way. But how should this be? Charles was of gentle disposition, and could not have been impelled to an act so repugnant to the laws of chivalry, except by some violent passion,—the fear of treachery and the necessity of being beforehand with it without delay. He was not acquainted with the brothers de Favernay any more than they were with him. It could only, therefore, be as the result of some report or supposition that he thought he must get rid of them. Whose interest was it to suggest this wicked thought to Charles? He who would profit by the death of the two brothers,—Amaury."

"Alas!" said the Duke, "I begin to understand this terrible affair."

"You know, Sir Duke, that in consequence of ancient alliances, and the way in which the fiefs of Lorraine are settled, a great part of the domain of Favernay passes to that of Mirécourt in case of failure of heirs-male of Favernay. The estate of Mirécourt was restored to your seigneurial domain two years ago, and you gave it to your nephew Amaury. . . ."

"Enough, enough, Count, I see it all; and Amaury was playing a safe game. If Charles killed the brothers de Favernay, Amaury would see the estate I have given him increased by that of Favernay; and if my son was killed. . . ."

"Yes, Sir Duke: if Charles was killed, Amaury might become Duke of Lorraine."

A long silence followed this conversation. The Duke seemed a prey to the most poignant anguish: the face of the old knight, grave and impassive, seemed as that of a statue.

"But," rejoined the Duke hastily, "what could Amaury have said to my son to induce him to attack these young men? What stories could he have invented to induce him to disgrace himself by an act of felony?"

"Sir Duke, your son was a good and gentle young knight, well instructed, but rather weak-minded, and easily persuaded. I ventured to say to you one day, that perhaps the company of staid, experienced knights would be better for him than that of Amaury, with whom all his days were passed in the pleasures of the chase. . . ."

"Alas! it is true, and in my heart I judged thee somewhat harsh towards youth, Count."

"And therefore I did not urge the matter further; nor should I have spoken of this to your grace, if since that

day I had not attentively watched the conduct of the young men, in the hope of preventing evil, and of seeing the ducal crown of Lorraine pass without dishonour to the head of your only son. . . . Unfortunately the evil genius prevailed. I had no difficulty in perceiving that Amaury, who never looked one straight in the face, was consumed by an insatiable ambition, and that he was engaging in a thousand schemes to obtain his ends. What he may have said to Charles, I do not know; but there are many plausible stories which he might have invented to set him against the young men who had been summoned to your court; especially as the brothers Hugh and Gerard have the reputation of being accomplished young knights, brave (and one of them has just proved it), favourites of the ladies, and endowed with the intelligence of their mother, one of the noblest women of Lorraine. It is easy to excite jealousy and to magnify the most trifling circumstances in the mind of a youth of twenty. But what is the use of dwelling on the irreparable past, Sir Duke? it only remains for your grace to come out of this affair with unblemished honour; and since you deign to ask my advice, I will give it you without reserve.

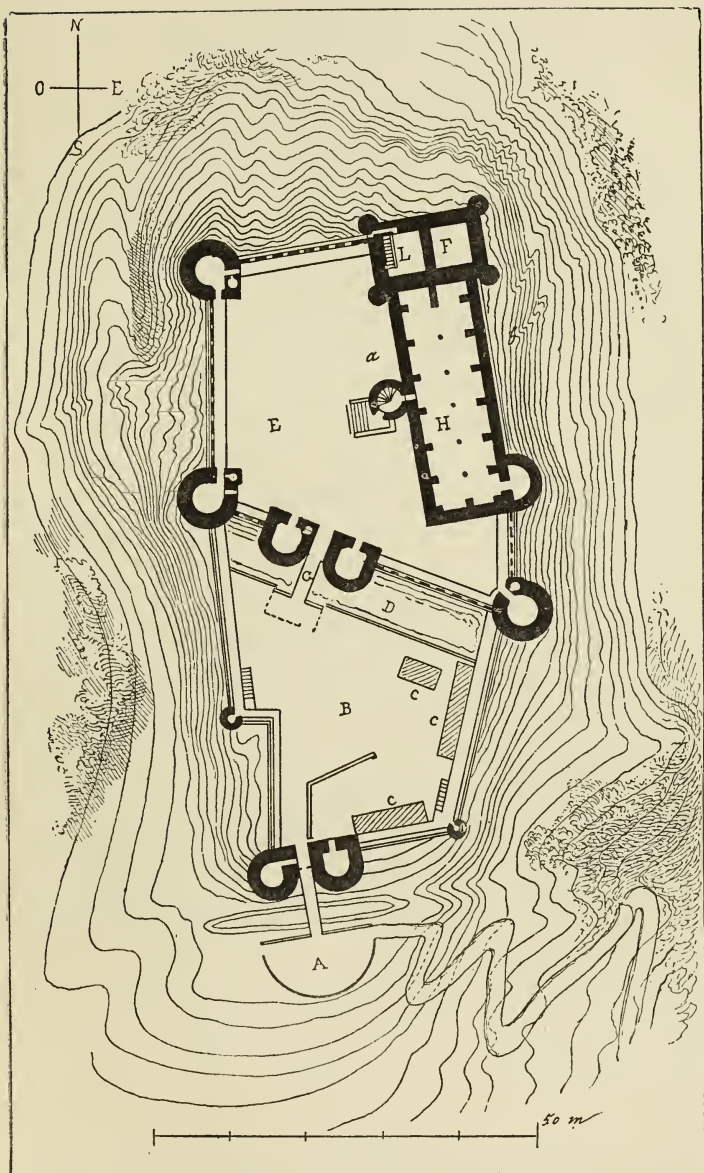
“After you have conveyed the body of your son to the monastery, assemble your knights, take advantage of the presence of the Abbot of Cluny, call witnesses, and have the real facts of the case ascertained before all, and a statement of them drawn up, to be preserved under your seal. If your son’s action is a stain upon his honour, he has washed it out with his blood; but cost what it may, the Duke of Lorraine must not fail to show himself a just judge even of his own kin. When every one shall have recognised him as such—even when his own interests are concerned, there will not be a baron who will venture to revert to this sad affair. Judgment having being pro-

nounced, or rather the case having been duly investigated, make a new grant of their lands to those who were securities for Amaury, and which were confiscated in consequence of his defeat. Show honourable consideration to the brothers Hugh and Gerard, and send them back safe and sound to their mother ; if by God's blessing they do not die of their wounds."

Count William's recommendations were carried into effect. But pending the trial, Epergos and Doxius had scarcely an opportunity of accomplishing their mission to Duke Thibaut with which they had been entrusted. As envoys bearing sealed letters, they were permitted to wander as they pleased about the castle until such time as the Duke could give them an audience.

The Castle of Bellefontaine (fig. 97) occupies the summit of a steep rocky spur, dotted with a few clumps of stunted firs. The only approach is by a winding road on the southern side. In this quarter a large barbican A,¹ inclosed by a plain battlemented wall of masonry, fronts a bridge thrown over a ditch excavated in the rock. This bridge, which in case of siege is easily taken away, is protected by two large towers between which is the gateway, defended by a machicoulis, and closed by gates and a portcullis. When the entrance between the two towers has been passed, admission is gained by a slight incline into the bailey or fore-court enclosed by lofty battlemented walls, and against which on the inside are placed the stables and servants' quarters C. These buildings are of timber, and can be quickly destroyed if the bailey appears to be in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, and the garrison are obliged to retreat within the castle, which

¹ See the detailed description of a Castle of the Feudal Times during their most characteristic period, in the "Annals of a Fortress," by the Author of this Treatise : Sampson Low & Co., London.

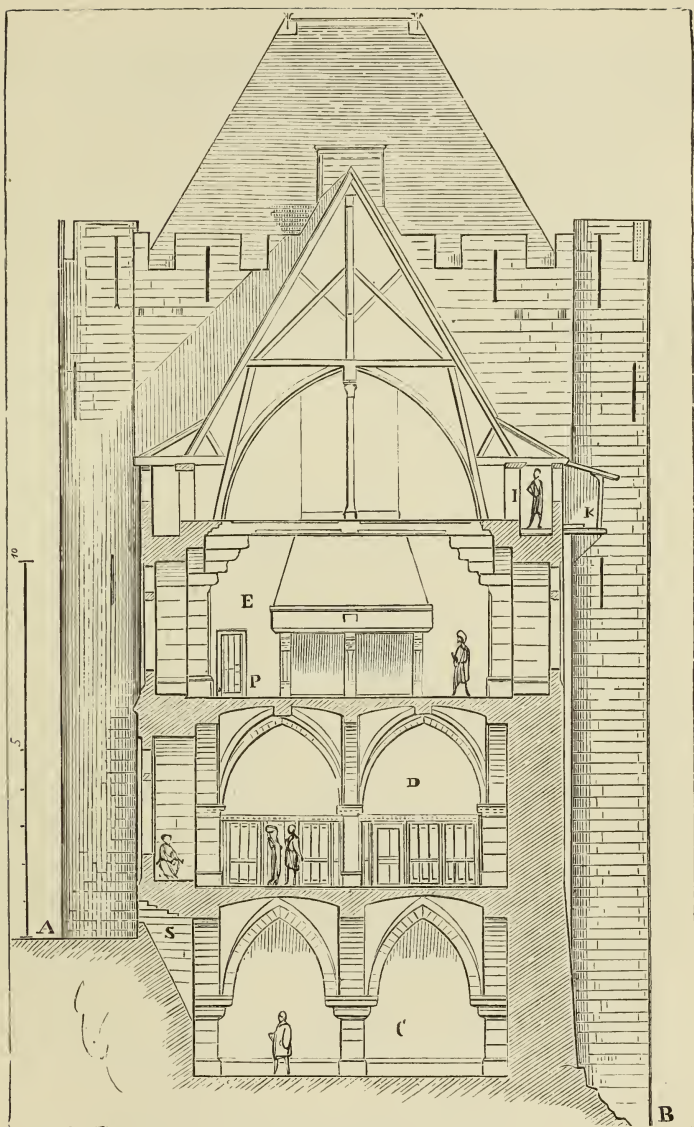


Plan of Feudal Castle (A. D. 1220).—FIG. 97.

is separated from the bailey by a second deep ditch D, likewise sunk in the rock.

In front of the bridge of the castle is a small barbican defended by a simple palisade. This bridge G, arranged like that before mentioned, is protected by two towers, with a gate between them. On passing this, admittance is gained into the court E, which is surrounded by high walls with strong towers at the angles. The inhabited part of the castle consists only of the great building H, and the donjon F. A broad circular staircase with a flight of steps in front, leads to the different stories of this building, which is sufficiently defended on the outer side by the inaccessible escarpment which it overlooks.

A tranverse section on the line *a b* gives the arrangement of the interiors of this large building (fig. 98). The level of the court is at A, and the rocky escarpment at B. From the court there is a descent to the vaulted basement story C, appropriated to the kitchens and the storage of provisions, which are let down by a windlass. These cellars get light through the wide air-holes S. The floor of the ground-story apartments is somewhat raised above the level of the court. This ground-story is vaulted in two spans like the cellars on a row of slender pillars; and is divided by wooden screens (*clotets*) into several rooms having each a window overlooking the court. These are occupied by the barons and knights who are intimate friends of the Duke. Above is the great hall E, which occupies the entire length of the building as far as the donjon. At each end is a vast fireplace. The great hall is covered with a fine boarded roof, upon whose tie-beams—in the event of a siege—might be placed a wooden floor, capable of affording quarters for a numerous garrison, which would then be in close proximity to and at the level of the defences I, consisting of a crenelated rampart-walk



Section of main Building of Feudal Castle (A.D. 1220).—FIG. 98.

to which at need are added timber hoardings K, for the purpose of protecting the foot of the walls, and shielding the archers and cross-bowmen.

From the great hall the only communication with the donjon is by the small door P, which is strongly barred and closed besides with a portcullis. It is in the donjon that the lord of the castle resides. The donjon is divided in its entire height by a partition wall;¹ and the only way from one of the two apartments into the other, is by narrow and indirect passages. The heights of the floors of the donjon are at the level of those of the main building; but the only entrance to the donjon from without, is by a doorway at the level of the first story and a ladder. The usual way by which the Seigneur goes to his apartments is by mounting the principal stairs, crossing the great hall, and entering by the small door P. The way into the rooms of the ground-floor and the cellars, from the first story of the donjon, is by a straight flight of steps L, in the interior. From the cellar story there is an exit leading to the rocks outside by a narrow passage cut through the thickness of the wall, and a postern masked by the north-west angle turret. The defences of the donjon command those of the main building as shown by the section; and one of the turrets contains a flight of stairs leading from the first story to the second and to the battlements above, which can be furnished with hoardings. The chapel is contrived in one of the rooms of the donjon, and wells sunk in the rock in several places supply fine clear water.

Figure 99 gives the view of this castle from the south-east side.

The mission with which Epergos was intrusted, was neither more nor less than to furnish Duke Thibaut with new information in the art of fortifying strong places,—

¹ See the plan, figure 97.



EXTERIOR VIEW OF MAIN BUILDING OF FEUDAL CASTLE (A.D. 1220).—FIG. 99.

[To face page 364.

information brought from Palestine by Baron Guy, who had taken a very active part in the defence of the Castle of La Roche-Pont against the Duke of Burgundy, about twenty years before.¹ Baron Guy was dead, but his nephew the Sieur de la Roche-Pont, whose eldest son had espoused a daughter of Duke Thibaut, was extremely desirous of transmitting to his kinsman the valuable information collected by this Baron Guy, not only respecting fortification but the composition of Greek Fire and rockets. The Duke who was aware of the object of our travellers' visit, directed that Epergos, in particular—as the part of the mission especially intrusted to Doxius had no reference to fortification—should be invited to occupy himself in inspecting the most secret arrangements for the defence of the Castle until he could find time to converse with him; consequently, when an audience was granted him, Epergos could speak to the Duke with knowledge.

“Sir Duke,” said he, “your Castle of Bellefontaine is better defended by its situation than by human handiwork; the purport of my mission, therefore, is inapplicable to a stronghold like this. But so puissant a noble could not resolve to shut himself up in an eagle's nest like this and wait for his enemy, as one of his vassals might do. He will require strong fortresses in the open country, where he may collect his armies and give them a strong position. Now in Syria, the Christians often have to defend an immense territory against an enemy who is on the alert and is always armed; and if they have lost Jerusalem, it has not been for want of defensive precautions, but because divisions sprang up among them and they were unable to unite their forces at the opportune moment.

“Baron Guy, uncle of the Sieur de la Roche-Pont, who had a good memory and profound experience, and who had

¹ See the history of this castle in “Annals of a Fortress.”

in his time been a warrior in Syria, had made use of his opportunities to collect a great deal of information relating to the art of fortifying not only isolated places but a whole district ; and it is this information, digested by his nephew, which I am commissioned by him to convey to you. It is contained in these parchments, the handwriting being that of a clerk, Brother Jerome ; but verbal explanations will be necessary, which I am ready to give with your lordship's permission."

And so Epergos fulfilled his mission to the satisfaction of the Duke ; for he was able to prove to him that the castles hitherto built were too contracted ; that in the event of a vigorous attack the defence was obstructed by its arrangements, and that the garrison could not take the offensive if the opportunity was presented ; that the defences should be extended ; and that by means of very strong posts, detached, but able to communicate with one another by signals, they should protect the approaches to a considerable distance, and stop the march of an enemy, or oblige him to divide his forces.

The Duke listened attentively to Epergos, and having caused a transcript to be made of all he said, he entertained him with the best of everything, notwithstanding the grief with which he was overwhelmed. Doxius having also conveyed his message to the Duke, the companions went their way, loaded with handsome presents.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE RENAISSANCE.

“MY good and learned friend;” said Epergos to Philibert—an architect in great request in the construction of important buildings both in the provinces and in the city—“my good and learned friend, despite all you say, your architecture is neither Greek nor Roman, but really and truly, French Architecture in the reign of the Most Christian and Most Glorious King Charles the Ninth, who no more resembles Pericles or Augustus than your palaces do those of Athens or Ancient Rome.”

“Indeed,” replied Philibert. “Did not the great king Francis, like the Medici and other princes whom it is needless to mention, send for and purchase all sorts of rare and precious books that could be found in Syria, Egypt, Greece, and other foreign countries, in order to enrich his libraries and facilitate the investigations of the learned in matters relating to Pagan Antiquity, and particularly the noble art of Architecture?”

“Say that if you please in your writings,” my good friend, “but I should much like to see those ancient books which instruct you in your profession.”

“Well, then,—there is Vitruvius . . .”

“I grant you him, with all my heart . . . but go on, please.”

“Frontinus, Cicero, Pliny, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, and others . . .”

“My good friend, you might read Aristotle, Plato, Pliny,

Cicero, and Frontinus for a hundred years, but I will give you a kingdom if you will find enough information in them all to enable you to build a house."

"But there are passages touching on Architecture in the letters of Cicero and Pliny."

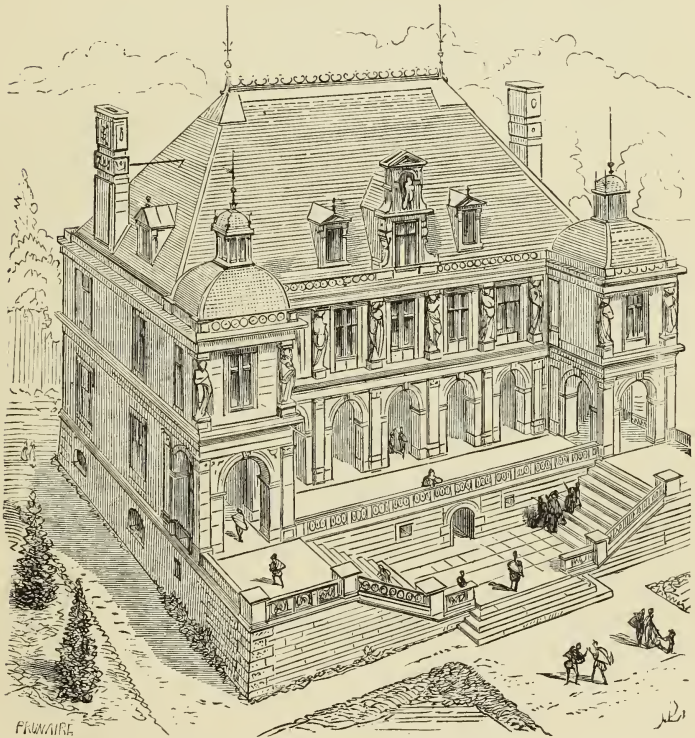
"Yes; these gentlemen talked about their *villæ*, and were fond of describing to their friends the comforts and conveniences appertaining to them, in order to induce them to pay them a visit; but just try and build something on the strength of the descriptions given by these amateurs. *Entre nous*, it would be better to give up this pretension to imitate an antiquity with which you are really unacquainted; reserve this sort of talk for your noblemen who, dressed in their slashed trunk-hose, narrow doublets with long hanging sleeves and short Spanish cloaks, hats without brims ornamented with clasps and decorated with orders, fancy themselves living in palaces built in classic fashion, and have Livy translated to them among their parrots and greyhounds. Mere fashion, my good friend, mere fashion. Make the best of it, but do not be its dupe.

"In fact, for the last thirty years or more I myself have remarked that most of those who have made up their minds to build, have begun work with a haste as great as their deliberation beforehand was slight, asking advice at hazard of persons full of presumption and knowing nothing of art, but who profess to be extremely clever and expert in matters of Architecture.

"These dabblers in Greek and Latin are not even masons or carpenters, but fawning parasites and impostors in the science, who seduce the nobles into heavy expenditure, often to their ruin and shame; for in aspiring to immortal renown, they only bring upon themselves vexation, debts, and the suspicion of mental aberration."

"Very good; talk if you like to the *soi-disant* admirers of Classic Architecture, in the language of the divine Rabelais'—Limousin scholar; but with me, my friend, I beg you to dismiss these puerilities, and call things by their right names . . . You mentioned, I believe, that you were completing a small mansion near the Bastille,—with which you were satisfied. Can it be seen?"

"Certainly, friend Epergos, you may see it. I have



View of a Renaissance Mansion (Paris)—FIG. 100.

given a good deal of thought to it, and my noble client, wishing to be spared the trouble, has allowed the architect

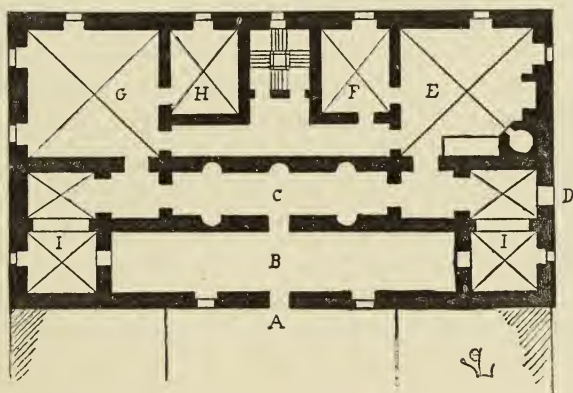
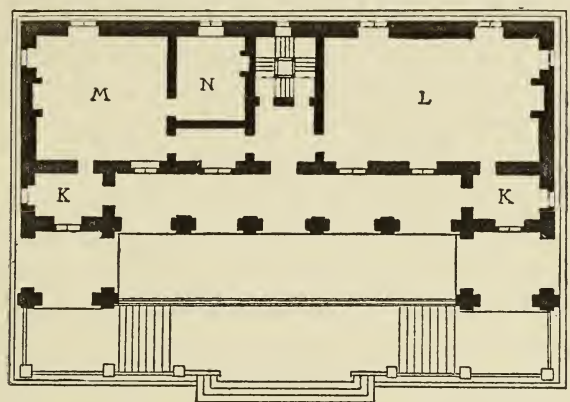
the fullest liberty to appoint the master-masons, and workmen at his discretion. Accordingly you will see that the work has been well carried out."

"Let us go and see it then!"

Epergos and Philibert the architect set off towards the Bastille, and passing through the Rue St Antoine, they entered a court enclosed by a railing fixed on a low wall. The mansion, set back about sixty feet from the railing, stood by itself, and was surrounded by gardens which extended behind for a distance of one hundred and fifty or sixty feet. Philibert had reason to be satisfied with his work, for the aspect of this mansion on entering the court was elegant and pleasing (fig. 100). The ground-floor, raised about twelve feet above the level of the gardens, was preceded by an approach of steps divided into two flights laterally, with a few steps in front. The two flights landed beneath two pavilions adjoining a portico, set back so as to leave a terrace between these two pavilions. Above this portico rose the first story, ornamented with fine Caryatides at the angles, and on the piers. The lateral façades, as also that of the back of the house, were extremely simple. The whole was well built with fine dressed stone and covered with slated roofs, with large dormer windows of stone in the middle of the two principal sides, and other smaller ones covered with lead.

When Epergos had complimented his friend on this picturesque façade, they entered by the basement story on the level of the court. This story was vaulted (fig. 101), and was principally devoted to the offices and kitchens; the door A, however, made between the two flights of steps, was for the use of the family, who could go and enjoy the cool air in summer in the gallery B, and in that which Philibert called the grotto C—a dark retreat ornamented with niches. The domestics entered by the side door D,

to get to the kitchen E, and the offices F, G, H. At I were cellars. The central staircase ascended to the living rooms, and also descended to the cellars. The elevated ground-



Plan of a Renaissance Mansion (Paris).—FIG. 101.

floor contained, besides the porticos, serving as vestibules, two ante-rooms K, a great hall L, and a large room M, with wardrobe N.

The first floor was distributed in nearly the same manner, excepting that the portico furnished a charming gallery, and the two pavilions pleasant cabinets. In the roof were bedrooms for the servants. On either side of the entrance-court was a stable and outbuildings.

"It is wonderful," said Epergos to Philibert when they had inspected the interior of the mansion, and were walking in the little garden, which was being planted, "how every nation preserves its customs age after age. The Florentines, Romans, Milanese, and Venetians affect to adopt the formulas of classic dwellings, yet each of these peoples invariably adheres to the same internal arrangements as have been in use for centuries. All their efforts to revert to classic art tend to nothing more than the adoption of certain orders—certain architectural details borrowed from those classic times, and with which they overlay the façades as with a borrowed dress. You do exactly the same here, my excellent friend ; your charming mansion is a French mansion, planned like those erected one or two hundred years ago. Only instead of pointed arches, you have put semi-circular arcades in your porticos ; instead of Gothic buttresses which strengthen the piers, you have put Roman Doric columns with Caryatides above. In place of pyramidal roofs on your pavilions, you have erected square cupolettes, surmounted by lanterns. It is a dress in the fashion of the day, but the body has changed neither in form nor in structure. Mind, I am not finding fault ; I am simply making an observation. If you go to Venice you will see that the palaces which are being built there at the present day are, in point of plan, construction, and interior arrangement, just like those erected there in former times. The architects merely do what you are doing here ; they substitute for the Gothic casing a casing borrowed from the decorative forms of Classical Antiquity. It is the

same in Florence, in Rome, and throughout Italy. There, as well as here, you all of you try to speak Latin ; but the ideas and wants which you express in a Latinity more or less pure, are not at all the ideas and wants expressed by the ancients ; they are your own,—neither more nor less. That is why I do not attach to this old wardrobe, which you have borrowed from Classic Art, the importance you seem to give it ; I have glanced through some of the recently published books in which you attempt to restore the public or private edifices of Antiquity from information afforded by ruins. I was curiously interested in seeing those ancient buildings transformed by you, in perfect good faith, into buildings of your own time. Why then not remain simply what you are—what the course of centuries has made you,—following your natural genius and endeavouring to improve your knowledge ? Why this somewhat childish return to forms which are quite out of harmony with your requirements and habits ? Not that I advocate your neglecting the study of the laws, the literature, or the arts of the ancients ; they furnish a treasure which has been too long buried in oblivion, and with which you should become well acquainted ; a treasure of which you should make use, not in substituting it for your present possessions, but to increase them. I will take only one example to explain my meaning.

“ You invented in France, more than three hundred years ago, a system of vaulting, superior to that of the Romans, inasmuch as it admits the utmost freedom in its employment ; a system which is at the same time light, readily applicable everywhere, and suited to the nature of the materials which our country possesses in abundance.

“ Well now, you are abandoning this system, which was an improvement—a useful discovery—to return to the ancient Roman vaulting—a type of construction which is

reasonable only in connection with the methods adopted by the Romans, which you do not employ, and which by no means allow complete liberty to the architect. Why should you do this ? What good purpose can it serve ?” During this discourse Doxius had come to join Epergos and Philibert.

“Yes,” said he ; “people are getting weary at last of these pretended improvements : in advancing they encounter ever-increasing obscurity, and retrace their steps to get back to the light. It is high time we should, for we are getting involved in darkness !”

Epergos had no desire to engage in discussion with his old companion just then ; so addressing Philibert again, he said : “Notwithstanding all I have said, my friend, I consider your mansion charming, and cannot but congratulate the nobleman who has the good fortune to possess it.”

“A Huguenot !” muttered Doxius.

Epergos affected not to have heard ; and after some remarks complimentary to the architect, the two companions left him.

When Epergos and Doxius were alone, going along the arsenal, the former said : “Thou art in truth a singular being. I remember thee being initiated into the mysteries of the Egyptians, ignoring everything outside the pious rites of that people, and rejecting as a crime every other mode of doing homage to the divine Order of the universe. Then the Assyrians, in their turn, were, in thy estimation, the veritable interpreters of sacred things. Next, after having embraced I know not what other ideas, thou wert seized with a fanatical regard for paganism after the fashion of the Romans, thinking that nothing was or could be superior to the blending of the priest and the magistrate recognised by their systems. Thou wert wont to regard the Christians as vile intriguers or maniacs, aiming at the

disorganisation of society. That phase passed through, Buddhism became thy faith; the world must be converted to Buddhism.

"Back again among the Christians, fanaticism took possession of thee in another shape, and for the precept of Christ: 'Love one another!' thou hast substituted the dictum: 'Love me, or I kill thee!'

"At present thou art incensed against the new sect—the Huguenots, as thou callest them; it is not enough for thee to have helped to get poor heretical wretches burned by hundreds in days of yore. Yet thou hast just been telling me that the nations are wishing to retrace their steps. Why then—since thou assertest that the shadows grow deeper the farther we advance—dost thou not go back to the worship of Isis and Osiris?"

"The day of retribution is at hand," retorted Doxius, "and it is useless to reply to idle questions. I have not the power to arrest the spirit of evil—the spirit of pride—from gradually invading the world; my duty, however, is to stay this evil as far as my strength enables me. I must avail myself of the weapons now in use, and not those which are rusted and obsolete. Besides, it takes a long time to enable us to come up with Truth, and when we have reached her, we should walk at her side, and not before her; for then we lose our way in darkness."

"Metaphor proves but little. What is clear in all this is that thou always sidest with the strongest, in the hope of retarding the natural progress of things in this world, to preserve the position thou hast secured for thyself; then when the time comes that, in spite of thy efforts, progress has been accomplished at the cost of ills and innumerable calamities and cruel struggles, some fine morning thou abandonest the principles thou hadst declared immutable—the highest expression of truth,—to join the ranks of the

defenders of a new order of things, which thou again pronouncest immutable. This may be clever, perhaps; but is it perfectly honest? I leave it to thy conscience to decide."

"My conscience tells me that the spirit of evil is persistent, that it is watchful, assumes a thousand shapes, and seduces men by continually offering them new horizons full of deceitful promises. I occupy the centre of resistance, wheresoever that centre may be; it is not for me to determine it; I can but take my place there."

"Be it so . . . another metaphor. I see that thou art disposed to give us plenty of trouble. But at least spare my friend Philibert."

"Is he a Huguenot?"

"I' faith, I know not; but for my sake, suppose that he is not!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

ABOUT a month ago eight persons met at Bréban's to celebrate the promotion of one of the party to the rank of Captain in the navy. Besides the Captain, the company included Epergos, Doxius, a journalist, a government official, an architect, an engineer, and a painter.

The conversation soon turned on the future expeditions of the Captain, and the countries to which the service would take him. Each one had his say, and numerous anecdotes more or less authentic, and statements more or less correct, were volunteered respecting those remote regions.

Epergos would frequently give utterance to doubts, or would endeavour to correct exaggerations: "Epergos is intolerable," said the painter, "and puts a grey glaze over everything. In Heaven's name, leave us our belief in the vivacity of contrasts, or there is an end to Art."

THE ENGINEER.—"It is not Epergos we must take to task, if the rapidity of travelling and the diffusion of science and the discoveries of the age throw a uniform tint over every corner of the globe, and if the Japanese build steam-boats and railways and light their cities with gas; if the Persians wear paletots just as we do, and the infantry of the Sultan are armed with needle-guns."

THE PAINTER.—"At least let us still believe in these contrasts; allow our imagination to revel in them; do not kill in us the sentiment of the picturesque by painting the bald reality."

DOXIUS.—“Formerly, good and evil were equally distributed over the earth. Here was truth, there error: now all is changed: truth and error are so intimately mingled, and have such a good understanding with each other, that we have only bastard fruits, — a poor and unwholesome food from which we cannot even extract the life-giving juices—to such a degree are they blended with the poisonous element.”

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL.—“Doxius is right to some extent; consequently it is the duty of a government to extract these nutritious juices in order to supply the people with them alone.”

THE EDITOR.—“The difficulty, my good fellow, is to distil these nutritious juices; and I do not care to see the government become distillers, for if they make a mistake we are sure to be poisoned.”

THE ARCHITECT.—“For goodness’ sake don’t let us talk politics; with these newspaper writers we always come to that. Tell us, Epergos—you who have seen everything, and have visited so many countries,—what do you think of those Cambodian remains, of which some fragments have been deposited in the palace of Compiègne, and of which I have seen photographs? Have you examined them,—the photographs and specimens to which I refer?”

EPERGOS.—“I have done more than that; I have visited the buildings *in situ* . . . A long time ago, it is true.”

THE ARCHITECT.—“Well, to what civilisation do they belong? I fancy I can detect in them something of Hindoo, Chinese, and Mongolian characteristics; and, altogether, they appear to belong rather to an art in its decline than to one in its infancy.”

EPERGOS.—“Your notions are correct; but it would take long to trace the thread of those Oriental arts.”

THE CAPTAIN.—“Epergos always answers in this fashion,

and seems to be afraid of enlightening us: at the same time, I can bear witness that he knows a great deal respecting all these questions that appertain to the ancient civilisations; and I remember that before setting out for one of my last voyages to Cochin-China he gave me such accurate information respecting some ancient buildings, that I was able to find them exactly in the places indicated; only they were in ruins,—a fact of which our friend was, doubtless, not aware, as he had described halls and ceilings of which nothing existed but *débris*. And what is particularly remarkable is, that in the country itself, they assured me these edifices had been in ruins for more than a couple of centuries.”

EPERGOS.—“There is nothing extraordinary in this: we restore in thought an object of which we see only the fragments, and consequently the impression resulting from this labour of the brain endures while the recollection of the reality is obliterated.”

THE ARCHITECT.—“I am by no means satisfied with your explanation, Epergos. You have seen the buildings of Cambodia, in the kingdom of Siam,—those vast buildings now buried amid forests,—buildings which indicate a flourishing and thickly-peopled state, but which is now in part an absolute solitude.

“Describe that civilisation to us, or at least tell us about your travels in those countries.”

EPERGOS.—“The *Ego*, as one of the ancients says, is intolerable; and I have no desire to play the part of those special correspondents of the newspaper who only discourse to their readers of the adventures they have met with, the dangers they have run, and the good cheer they have enjoyed; I must tell you, my friend, that your question would oblige me to give you a very long and, probably, tedious lecture on the arts of the Far East. The arts of

Cambodia are, moreover, a very small item of interest in the midst of that immense continent which has seen the birth and extinction of so many civilisations."

THE CAPTAIN.—"We will excuse the details, if you wish, especially as they would want four and twenty hours to give, even if you were willing to talk to us all the time. But you can give us a word or two on the general principles; for you have told me over and over again when I have questioned you about my future travels: 'The same phenomenon is always recurring; the world is not so varied as you think; in the moral and material order of things, as far as humanity is concerned, three or four principles re-appear everywhere, and always independently of the time, environment, and circumstances.'"

EPERGOS.—"Well! if the aspect of the world is always the same, you know as much about the matter as I."

THE ENGINEER.—"Come, Doxius, help us to make Epergos talk, as you have been his constant companion; or else talk for him."

DOXIUS.—"I think it is best to be silent about matters that concern the past; for I have always observed that the study of History—of what are called Civilisations, has made the human race worse instead of better."

THE ENGINEER.—"How worse?—Because that study teaches men to compare, to reason, and to avoid the rocks on which others have made shipwreck?"

DOXIUS.—"Perhaps one book would be quite enough to read, if it contained the truth." (*The Bible*)

ALL.—"Bravo, Doxius!"

THE ARCHITECT.—"Let us talk seriously; for whatever Doxius may say, I do not believe he wants to treat our libraries after the fashion of the early Christians of Alexandria."

THE EDITOR.—"I don't know that; these conservators

of the *status quo* are terribly disposed to suppress all that troubles them; and if I ever become minister of Education I shall take care not to appoint Doxius Curator of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*."

THE ARCHITECT.—"I beg to move the previous question, or we shall get into the slough of politics. Epergos, just tell us whether you think men first built with wood, or with stone, or with earth? This question has only to do with generalities, and is a very simple one."

EPERGOS.—"Not so simple as you suppose. If men are born in a wooded region, they will naturally employ timber to make themselves shelters; but if they find themselves in a country where timber is scarce and where stone or clay abounds, they will try to make themselves dwellings of these materials.

"But when men, born in a thickly-wooded region, and who have consequently acquired the habit of building with timber, betake themselves to a land which is devoid of those large vegetable growths, they find themselves somewhat embarrassed. Still they must have houses. In this case, although they employ the novel material at their disposal, they are naturally disposed to preserve the form and appearance of the wooden structures to which they had been accustomed.

"Now, whether it was the result of natural predisposition, or of the environment by which the various races of mankind were surrounded at the outset. . . ."

DOXIUS.—"Ah! there he is again with his 'races'!"

ALL.—"Don't interrupt the speaker! Down with the interrupter!"

EPERGOS.—"It happened that these races adopted certain methods of construction,—methods whose original elements are handed down from age to age, and make their appearance at the present day as manifestly as do the

roots of each of the languages spoken by those primitive races. To illustrate this by example; the Aryas, whose original abode was a mountainous and wooded region extending from the Upper Indus to the Brahmapootra, and stretching northwards into Upper Thibet, and as far as the Altai chain, towards its western extremity, evidently made use of the timber which those mountains afforded them in abundance, to erect their dwellings.

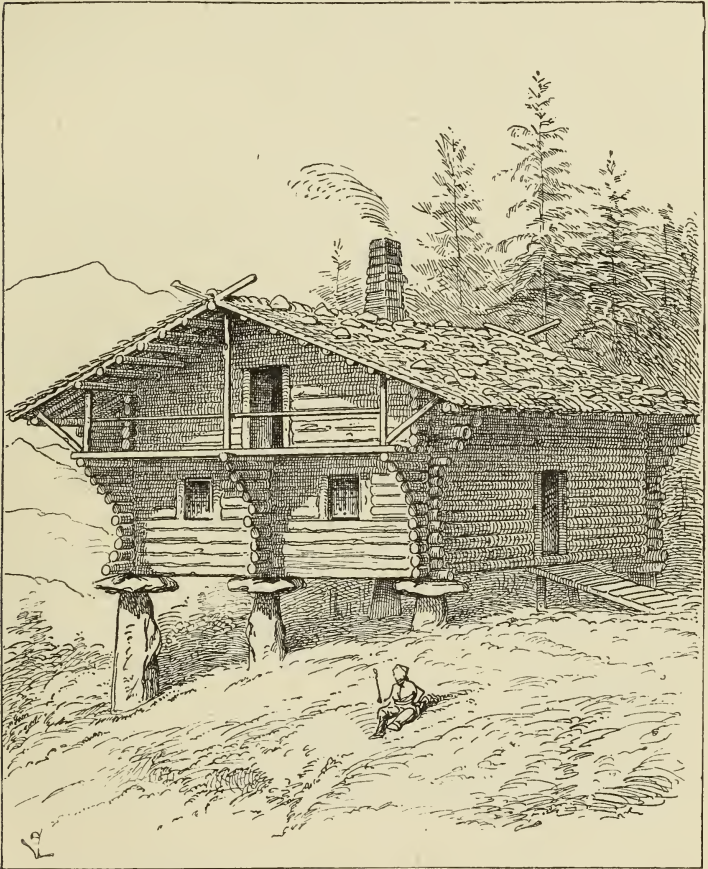
“When they quitted those elevated regions and descended first into Hindostan, then towards Ancient Media and Persia, then towards the Euxine; subsequently, in a westerly direction towards our own continent, Europe, they came sometimes to wooded countries, and in that case continued to build according to their original methods; sometimes to countries where the timber was scarce, and then they built—or, more correctly, made others build for them—with pise or with stone; but these dwellings reproduce, in innumerable details, the appearance of a structure in wood. Witness those Indian buildings, which are of a comparatively recent period, since they only date from the commencement of Buddhism, and which, although erected with stone, or even hewn in the rock, figure timber constructions.

“The buildings found in Cambodia, to which our friend just now referred, and which are posterior to the Christian era, although built entirely of sandstone—the roofs included,—preserve the appearance of timber structures in so striking a manner, that at a distance they might be taken for wooden buildings.

“Does it follow that these Cambodian edifices, any more than others of the same class, are to be attributed to the Aryan race? By no means. Those of Cambodia, as we judge from the numerous designs sculptured on their walls, are the product of the Mongolian race; but whence

had the influences here manifest reached the Mongolian race?

“They are traced to Aryan traditions, and that is why this art at second hand, mingled in its details with very various elements, exhibits all the marks of an art in its



Himalayan Dwelling.—FIG. 102.

decadence. This is never the case with the unmixed or nearly unmixed productions of that Aryan race; they are

not obscured by a confused mass of adventitious elements ; they maintain their identity through successive ages. Perhaps you will be surprised if I tell you that the *châlets* of the Swiss mountains are exactly like the dwellings that are to be seen on the slopes of the Himalayas, and in the valleys of Cashmere. Such, however, is really the case. You will find the same construction, the same general appearance, as is presented in the drawing I have just at hand in this sketch-book (fig. 102), in those two parts of the globe which have no connection with each other.

“Thousands of years ago, the Swiss *châlets*, as well as those of Thibet and of the valley of Cashmere, were built in the same manner by sections of one and the same race separated long ages since.

“A good deal has been said of late about certain recent discoveries — ‘lake-dwellings.’ These lake-dwellings — dwellings, that is to say, built in the still waters of lakes, but far enough from the shores to make their isolation in the midst of waters a means of safety for the inhabitants — are attributable to special circumstances, and are not characteristic of one race more than another. There are lake-dwellings erected by the yellow race—the Chinese and Turanians,—and there are and were some erected by Aryas. Both alike preserve, though built under similar conditions, the modes of building peculiar to the Aryas and Turanians respectively.

“Here is another sketch (fig. 103) which shows some of those habitations built in Burmah, and which are made almost entirely of bamboos ; for that country produces them in abundance.

“There the influence of the Aryan and that of the yellow race—for while the high castes are descended from the Aryas, the common people are of Turanian blood—are both apparent. We observe combinations of timber framing

which belong to the Aryas ; on the other hand, the use of those mattings and of that bamboo-work in the building which more especially characterise the yellow race. The Lacustrine dwellings of the lake of Bienne must have greatly resembled these, with the exception of the bamboos, for which were substituted trunks of trees or even branches



Lacustrine Dwellings.—FIG. 103.

interlaced, and mud. I was, therefore, right when I said to our friend the Captain that we found the same phenomena

recurring again and again, or, to speak more correctly, that in every nation we invariably find the elements which betray their origin.

“Look at the Semites, who, in their infancy, did not build with wood, since it pleased the Creator to place them in countries where building timber has always been scarce. They must employ stone, or what is easier, river mud. Some of them have neither mud nor timber nor stone suitable for building. They live under tents ; but as the spots where they feed their flocks are successively depastured, they must be constantly on the look-out for new ground, which seems to recede before them : from the earliest times they have thus transported their tents from one place to another.

“Are we thence to conclude that these men have no conception of any other kind of shelter than that furnished by a few skins or coarse woollen stuffs sewn together ? Certainly not : and the proof is that when these pastoral people were able to settle anywhere, as in Egypt and Syria, in the most remote times, they built or set others to build, not in the way the Aryas did, but like their Semitic kindred.

“Now, while principles are invariable, and the vestiges of parent stocks are indelible, the results produced by the mingling of these stocks are infinite in variety, and their æsthetic quality must be pronounced feebler in proportion to the complication of these intermixtures.

“I have no great liking for formulas which, in questions such as this, may lead to misconception. I give you these, therefore, only as a very summary outline, which will render my explanations clearer by imparting to them the precision of a chemical process. Left to the guidance of their own instincts the Aryas always build in the same manner, and have such a marked predilection for timber constructions, that they seek by preference countries that are wooded, and

have a veneration for trees. All nations of Aryan origin are attached to forests, delight in them, live among them, and have certain woods which they regard as consecrated. The yellow race, following their natural disposition, and having perhaps originally settled in vast regions abundantly watered and marshy, are in the habit of building with reeds; at an early date they discovered the use of lime, the manufacture of bricks, enamelling and painting, the use of glues,—in fact, everything required by an industrial development of a primitive order, but in which they make rapid advances. The Semites either live, as a matter of necessity, in tents or in natural or artificial grottos; or they make themselves grottos with clay, that is, they erect concrete masses of mud or clay—hollow tumuli in which they are sheltered from the heat and from insects: for their settlements are in hot regions, thinly wooded, and where streams are infrequent. It was they who first supplied unconsciously the rudiments of vaulting.

“I leave out of sight certain races, which have either continued in a state of evident inferiority, or which are not clearly marked; for it is evident that nature does not approve of those sharply-defined classifications which are convenient for our purposes, but to which she is indifferent. It would not be right, however, to overlook what are called the Chamites—an important race, divided into two sections, black and white, but which appear to have had, from the earliest times, a special aptitude for works in stone: stone without the interposition of mortar,—stone superimposed, close-jointed and hewn. Very early mingled with the Semites, the mixture derived from that race a peculiar character,—a predilection for buildings of colossal dimensions and striking appearance, and for materials of great durability.

“This explains the fact that in certain countries of Africa and of Syria, and in Egypt and Phœnicia, might be seen

side by side with the clay and mud huts of the poor, those magnificent buildings erected with the aid of appliances, whose strength excites our astonishment.

“If, therefore, these elements being known, we mingle them in different proportions, we obtain various results, but in which, nevertheless, each of those elements can be discerned, however small in quantity.

“Accordingly, when the Aryas are found in contact with the Semites already mingled with Chamites, there results from this union an art of a high degree of perfection. The moral sense of the Arya leads him to reject those exaggerations of which the Chamites are so fond ; but for the structure in wood he substitutes a structure in stone, and he adopts the forms that are appropriate to the latter ; although traces of the first are still perceptible. This is the phenomenon whose highest expression is presented to us in Greek art. The Greek, who is perfectly acquainted with the use of lime and employs it for plastering, does not use mortar in dressed stonework ; it is set dry, with close joints, after the manner of the Phœnician buildings ; but to these constructions built according to the Phœnician method he gives forms which remind one of a structure in wood. The result, therefore, is an order of art whose productions are wonderful, but in whose composition the elements from which it sprung are none the less observable.

“If we go to Egypt we find that while the products of art are various, and their origin is enveloped in obscurity, analysis is nevertheless possible, and the elements to which they must have owed their origin can be brought to light. We observe the co-existence of a Semitic method of construction, an Aryan influence, and a very conspicuous Chamite element.

“If we turn to Rome, we see the construction testifying to origins not less diverse, but which remain, so to speak,

in juxtaposition without being intimately blended. The Roman constructs vaulting, which was not adopted by the Greeks, but of which the Etruscans made use ; he employs mortar in his buildings, but it is with brick, concrete, or rubble-work, never with dressed stone. He employs the latter, as the Greeks do, namely, laid dry with close joints, and he does so to the end of the Empire.

“In Roman art there is therefore a Phœnician, that is Etruscan and consequently Semitic element, mixed with one of Chanite origin, as well as an indubitable Aryan element ; for the Roman also, when occasion suggests it, builds with timber, and loves and venerates the forests.

“In his composition there is even a tincture of the yellow race ; for he has a predilection for structures in adhesive materials, and employs mortars without stint.

“And observe how ineffaceable is this influence of race. Look at the English¹ *cottage* ; we have still the Arya's house, not only in construction but arrangement. There you invariably see the living-room (hall) where the family assemble,—the parlour—reception room—place of assembly ; and next that separation of the domestic life from the public life ; the *gynæceum* of the Greeks and the *nursery* of the English, is pretty much the same place ; for the *gynæceum* must not be confounded with the harem ; the one is the sanctum of the family, the other a sort of aviary shut in from the gaze of strangers. Go to Sweden or Denmark, and you will find in the private houses those arrangements which date from the primitive times of the Aryan race,—the hall and the place reserved for the life of the family ; a place inviolable. Your old French *chateaux* exhibited the same arrangement before Gallo-Roman influences predominated over the Indo-Germanic ; *i.e.*, derived from what we call the Franks. In its structure,

¹ The Dwelling-house,—the Villa.

the true English cottage (villa) is still the timber house of the Arya, and even when built of stone the forms are suggested by the timber structure. Similarly, if you go to Damascus, to Cairo, to Ispahan, as also in Algeria or Tunis, and even in Spain, you find one and the same plan, adopted from a remote antiquity and adhered to down to the present day. The court, surrounded by porticos, the *patio* with its little chambers, and the upper room opening out of this patio, with its divans, and receiving only a borrowed light,—a cool and quiet place for the family gathering. Well! this very arrangement was to be found in a rudimentary form, and is still to be seen in some almost deserted cities of Southern Syria.

“A court merely enclosed with walls, with porticos formed of matting laid on reeds and a shelter at the far end.

“Nothing more resembled the streets of Modern Rome, than the streets of Ancient Rome.

“Let us visit China. It is easy for you to satisfy yourselves that the houses built four hundred years ago were exactly like those which are built there at the present day, since faithful representations of those habitations are extant; and if you go further back or search more widely, you will still find the same structure; for this reason, that it is the result of an elementary method, which is neither the consequence of a mixture, nor a deduction from principles already existing.

“Let us go to Mexico and Yucatan; there, indeed in the large edifices of Uxmal, Chichen-Itza, of Isamal, Palanque, and Mitla, the mixture of elements is manifest. We find the trace of original elements transferred thither at second hand, construction in wood portrayed, but simulated unconsciously even in stone; adhesive methods, masonry with mortar for example; stone worked in disregard of its natural qualities and the requirements of its setting, the

traces of ornamentation derived from woven stuffs and lace-work ; consequently, an art already very old,—in unmistakable decadence ; and with these decrepid forms a singular primitive barbarism in the plans and arrangements determined by the habits of those for whom the dwellings are built. Whence we may conclude that the nation by which those buildings were constructed sprang from very diverse origins, or that they were a degenerate issue, subjected to influences from powerful races that had long cultivated the arts, but which had only imperfectly and rudely assimilated those influences,—had badly digested them, so to speak,—and were, in especial, incapable of co-ordinating them, and choosing such elements as should be adapted to the climate and conditions in which circumstances has placed them.

“ But I will not fatigue you by an enumeration of all the consequences resulting from those origins. It is sufficient to have noticed the chief bearings of the question, and it is time to bring my remarks to a close.

“ It is then certain that in the course of ages those original elements have approached each other, have separated, and have been intermingled. For a long time it was very easy to distinguish them, because the fusions were recent or incomplex. As time went on they became more extensive and complicated. Nevertheless, analysis will even now enable us to discover those original elements, however complex their combination, just as we may always ascertain the origin of a language by its roots, and reconstruct it as soon as we have discovered some of those roots. The century in which we live has made great progress in the path of analysis, but the goal is still far off. In regard to human habitations the result of the inquiry will be that each will become acquainted with the elementary characteristics of his race or of the races from which he is

descended ; and such knowledge will enable him to improve his dwelling in accordance with his natural proclivities and aptitudes.

“The Renaissance movement, which was a veritable intellectual revolution, by bringing into notice a very considerable and most important period of the past, of which Europe was entirely ignorant ;—this movement, I say, by the enthusiasm it excited in favour of Classical Antiquity among all cultivated minds, turned this part of the globe for a time out of its normal path of progress. Classical Antiquity appeared so beautiful and perfect that it seemed desirable to stop at this point in human development, and to contract an indissoluble union with it. And admiration for that period of the past was at first confined to its form.

“Thus it was that the very considerable amount of valuable work that had been accomplished during the Middle Ages came to be disregarded, or even reckoned utterly worthless. This was a mistake ; more than this, it took for granted an impossibility. It is no more in the power of a period than of an individual or of a corporate body, however influential, to cancel a page in the book of human development, than to remove one of the geological formations on the plea that it is a coarse one. What has been once acquired is a possession for ever.

“But this enthusiasm for Classical Antiquity is now producing results of a more valuable character. It has given an impulse to the investigation of the entire past,—to a thorough scrutiny, analysis, and classification of all available data ; and one of the earliest results of this investigation has been that there is no such subject of study as an Antiquity isolated from the series of human records ; that all the cycles of historical evolution are linked together and assume new forms through a succession of phases and blended influences ; that here, as in geology, we cannot

understand a particular deposit without knowing that which is below and that which is above it. Those enthusiasts for Greek and Roman forms—for in their naïve admiration they were accustomed to confound them, utterly different though they are in their principle and in its expression—have succeeded in misleading Europe for two or three centuries,—a mere moment, however, compared with the life of humanity; and we have been inundated with neo-Greek and neo-Roman,—such indeed as would make Greeks and Romans laugh,—without the slightest regard for origins, natural aptitudes, climate, materials, or the novel conditions of social life. In Paris and in Rome, in Madrid and in St Petersburg, in Vienna and in Stockholm, so-called Greek and Roman palaces have been erected.

“Nevertheless, a generation of inquirers has arisen who have had no difficulty in demonstrating that humanity is not thus homogeneously constituted; that because a Pompeian house was charming under a Neapolitan sky, and admirably suited to the requirements of people who lived two thousand years ago, it by no means follows that such a house suits our time and climate. A decided tendency towards a reaction is therefore manifest. Every civilised nation has begun to inquire—and the inquiry will be prosecuted with increasing ardour—whence it comes, and what are its elements; and it is consequently endeavouring to adopt those original forms in art which are adapted to the genius and requirements of the race to which it belongs. This movement is already very apparent in England, in Germany, in Sweden, and in Russia, and it is becoming daily more marked. From Doxius’s point of view, this is, I am well aware, the culmination of moral disorder; for he has been always dreaming of a unity produced by authority, and has never been willing

to admit that human beings have aptitudes varying according to the diversity of their origin. I think, on the contrary, that in the development of these ideas there is a fresh source of prosperity and greatness for mankind.

“The Philosopher said to man: ‘Know thyself;’ and this is in fact the foundation of all wisdom. The time has come for us to say to humanity: ‘Investigate thy beginnings: thou wilt thus learn thy aptitudes, and wilt be able to pursue that path of true Progress to which thy destiny calls thee. . . .’”

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